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General Secretariat  
Academic Affairs



# The Foundations of Faith

in the Light of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*

by  
**A Committee of Scholars**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**In the Name of Allāh**  
**the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful**



## Translator's Notes

1- Footnotes with the inscription "Translator" at the end have been added to the original to facilitate the reading and understanding of the text.

2- The symbol (ﷺ), wherever found in this book is equivalent to the expression "The Exalted, the Sublime, etc." usually written after Almighty Allāh's name.

3- The normal invocations for Allāh's blessings or mercy to be on his Prophets or the Companions have been put in certain conventional symbols, such as (ﷺ)= May the peace and blessings of Allāh be on him, (ﷺ)= May Allāh's blessings be on him, (ﷺ)= May Allāh be pleased with him, (رضي الله عنها) = May Allāh be pleased with her, (ﷺ) and (رضي الله عنهما) = May Allāh be pleased with them, etc.

4- The following system of transliteration has been used in this book: *(next page)* ..

The Foundations of Faith

Arabic Letter or Mark	Transliterated or Transcribed as	Arabic Letter or Mark	Transliterated or Transcribed as
ء	,	ب	t
ب	b	ب	z
ت	t	غ	g
ث	th	خ	gh
ج	j	ج	f
ح	h	د	q
ك	kh	د	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	dh	ر	m
ر	r	س	n
ز	z	س	h
س	s	س	"w" as consonant and "ū" as vowel
ش	sh	س	"y" as consonant and "ī" as vowel
ص	s	س	ā (long vowel)
ض	ḍ		

Short vowels = 'a' for *fatḥah* ( ^ ); 'ī' for *kasrah* ( \_ ); 'u' for *dammah* ( ' ).

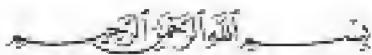
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## FOREWORD

**By His Excellency, Sheikh Sāliḥ bin ‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin Muḥammad Āl al-Sheikh, Minister for Islamic Affairs, Endowments, *Da’wah* and Guidance, the Supervisor-General of the Complex.**

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of all beings, who says in His Glorious Book, ﴿أَوْجِعُ إِلَيْكُمْ سَبِيلَ رَبِّكُمْ وَالْمُرْعَةَ لِلْحَسَنَةِ﴾.

**Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition** (*al-Nahl*: 125). May peace and blessings be upon the noblest of all Prophets and Messengers of Allāh, who has also said, (بَلْغُوا عَنِّي وَلَا أَبْلُغُهُمْ). **Convey of my message [to others], at least a single *āyah*<sup>(1)</sup>.** (*Bukhāri*: 3461).

In line with the directives of the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques, King ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Āl-Sa‘ūd regarding the extension of whatever is good to Muslims in the four corners of the earth. This includes, primarily, giving the Book of Allāh necessary attention, facilitating its publication, translating its meaning and distributing copies of it to Muslims or whoever may develop an interest in studying it among the non-Muslims. Furthermore, to publish any other literature that is beneficial to Muslims in either their religious or worldly affairs.

The Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, *Da’wah* and Guidance, represented here by the King Fahd Qur’ān Printing

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1- The word *āyah* here stands for whatever the Prophet (ﷺ) was heard saying or seen doing. This could be a portion of the Qur’ān as revealed to him by Allāh, or an explanation of it, otherwise known as the prophetic *Sunnah*. (Translator)

Complex in al-Madinah, having strongly believed in the importance of *Da'wah* (Calling to the religion of Islam) based on a sound conception and clear understanding, is hereby pleased to present the book:

"THE FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH IN THE LIGHT OF THE *QUR'ĀN AND THE SUNNAH*", with a view to educate Muslims on issues of *Aqidah* (Muslim's Belief), which is also the basis of their faith. The Prophet (ﷺ) has said, ﴿عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ الْجَنَاحِ مَا تَصْنَعُ وَمِنَ الْأَحْمَالِ مَا تَرْكُ﴾ There is a piece of flesh in the [human] body, should it be good (reformed), the whole of the body also becomes good. (*Bukhārī*: 52).

Other series of books on *Hadīth*, *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), Remembrance of Allāh and Supplication would also come into circulation *in sha Allāh*. We pray to Allāh, the Supreme, the Almighty, to make them all useful to the Muslims worldwide.

It is my pleasure to thank the authors, the review and drafting committees, and the translator, for their sincere efforts. I would also like to express my gratitude to the entire staff of the General Secretariat of the Complex for their great care and supervision.

I pray to Allāh (ﷻ) to protect this country, as a keeper of His religion and defender of the sound faith, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and his Crown Prince, may Allāh protect them. In conclusion of our supplication, we say, "Praise be to Allāh the Lord of all beings".



## Preface

Praise be to Allāh who has perfected for us the religion of Islam, completed His favour upon us, made our nation, the Muslim nation, the best of all nations and raised amongst us a Messenger of our own, who recites Allāh's words to us, purifies and teaches us both the Book and the wisdom<sup>(1)</sup>. May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, whom Allāh has sent as a mercy to all beings, and upon his family as well as his Companions.

Mankind and *jinn*<sup>(2)</sup> are created to worship Allāh alone. This has been stated in His saying that,

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

**And I created not the *jinn* and mankind except that they should worship Me.** (al-Dhāriyāt: 56).

Hence, *Tawhīd* (Monotheism) and sound belief originating from the two pristine and blessed sources, the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ) represent the utmost degree of fulfilment regarding the worship of Allāh. This *Tawhīd* is also the basis for the habitation of this universe, without which the alternative would be sheer disintegration, ruin and disorder. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿لَوْ كَانَ فِيهَا مَا يَرْهَدُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لِفَسْدِهَا فَتَبْخَلُنَّ اللَّهُو رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصْنَعُونَ﴾

**Had there been therein [the heavens and the earth] (other) gods besides Allāh, there would have been ruin in both. Glorified be Allāh, the Lord of the Throne [and exalted is He] above what they attribute to Him.** (al-Anbiyā' : 22).

1- The Book, that is the Glorious Qur'ān, while the word wisdom here represents the traditions of the Prophet (ﷺ) or *Sunnah*. (Translator)

2- The *Jinn* are a species of beings created by Allāh from fire.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَنْزَلُ الْأَنْزَلَ بِنَفْسِهِنَّ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ فَدَ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا﴾

It is Allāh who created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof. The commandment descends between them; that you may know that Allāh is able to do all things, and that Allāh comprehends all things in [His] Knowledge. (al-Talāq: 12).

There are other *ayahs* (verses) on this subject as well.

As it is not possible for human intellect to comprehend, independently, details of the Faith, Allāh has sent His Messengers and revelation to clarify such to mankind. Thus, they would be able to worship Him based on knowledge, understanding, crystal clear principles and upright fundamentals. Henceforth, Allāh's Messengers have come in succession to convey and explain this message to the people of their time. A testimony to this is found in the following Qur'ānic verses:

﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهَا نَذِيرًا﴾

And there never was a nation but a warner had passed among them. (Fātir: 24).

﴿ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا لَهُمَا رَّسُولًا﴾

Then We sent our Messengers in succession. (al-Mu'minūn: 44). i.e. one coming after another, until Allāh wound up His revelations with that which He has sent to the leader and the best of all His Prophets and Messengers, Muhammad (ﷺ), who delivered the message, discharged the trust, counselled his followers and strove earnestly in the cause of Allāh. He also called people to the religion of Allāh, both in secret and in public, and perfectly shouldered the burdens of the divine Message. Although he was extremely harmed in this respect, he

bore all the hardships with patience, just as the Messengers of firm resolution had done before. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was unrelenting in his effort to call people to the way of Allāh and lead them to His straight path, until He manifested the religion and completed His favour through him. As a result of the Prophet's *da'wah* efforts, many people embraced Islam. Moreover, never did he part with life until Allāh had used him to perfect His religion and complete His favour. Thus, He said in His Glorious Book,

﴿لَيْلَمَّا أَكَمَتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَنْجَيْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَعْصِي وَرَحِيمَتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ وَيَنْهَا﴾

**This day I have perfected for you your religion, completed my Favour upon you, and have approved for you Islam as religion.**  
(al- Mā'idah: 3).

The Prophet (ﷺ) has also explained in detail all the fundamental and non-fundamental aspects of this religion. The great scholar of the Abode of *Hijrah*<sup>(1)</sup>, Mālik bin Anas testified to this by saying, "It is implausible to assume that the Prophet (ﷺ) could have taught his followers how to become purified after using the toilet, but never cared to teach them to believe in the one and only God, Allāh".

Calling people to believe in one God, (Allāh), to worship Him with sincerity, and to renounce all forms of polytheism was the way of our Prophet, just as it had been the way of all the Messengers of Allāh before him; they all agreed on this and invited people to it. *Tawhīd* has consistently been the starting point of their *da'wah*, the essence of their message and the basis of their mission. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

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I- i.e. al-Madīnah al-Nabawiyah or the city of the Prophet (ﷺ). The word *Hijrah* means emigration. (Translator)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْبَأَنَا فِي هَذِهِ أَمْرًا إِنَّمَا يَعْبُدُونَهُ أَنَّهُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يَعْبُدْ مِنْ دِرْبِنَا حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الظَّلَامَةُ فَسَبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَوْنَاطِرًا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَيْنَهُمْ أَكْبَرُ ﴾

And certainly, We have raised in every nation a Messenger [proclaiming:] worship Allāh [alone] and shun false deities. Then of them were some whom Allāh guided, and of them were some upon whom straying became inevitably established. So travel through the land and see what the end of the deniers [of the truth] was. (al-Nahl :36).

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِنَّ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِي ﴾  
And We sent not before you any Messenger except that We revealed to him that, None has the right to be worshiped save Me, so worship Me [alone]. (al-Anbiyā' :25).

﴿ وَتَشَاءُ مِنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُشِّيْلَنَا أَجْعَلْنَا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِلَيْهِ يَعْبُدُونَ ﴾  
And ask those of Our Messengers whom We sent before you: Did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped besides the Most Merciful [Allāh]? (al-Zukhruf : 45).

﴿ شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الَّذِينَ مَا وَصَّنَّا لَكُمْ ثُمَّ كَوَافَّ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّنَّنَا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا يَعْبُدُونَهُمْ وَمُؤْمِنُونَ وَعَسَّى أَنْ أَفْعُلُوا الَّذِينَ وَلَا تَنْفَرُوا فِيهِ ﴾

He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Nuh, and that which We have revealed to you [Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Ibrahīm, Mūsā and ‘Isā, that you should establish the religion and be not divided therein. (al-Shūra: 13).

According to the two most authentic collections of the *hadīth* (Prophetic tradition), Abu Hurairah (رض) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(الأنبياء إخوة لعذات، أمهاتهم مشتركة ودينهن واحد).

**The Prophets [of Allāh]** are half siblings; brothers of different maternal parenthood, but their religion is one. (*Bukhārī*: 3443; *Muslim*: 2365). The religion, and, of course, the creed of the Prophets is thus, one and the same, even though there is variation in details of the law sent to each of them. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا لِكُمْ شِرَعَةً وَمِنْهَا جَاءَ﴾

**To each of you We prescribed a law and a method.** (*al-Mā'idah*: 48).

Every Muslim or *Mu'min*<sup>(1)</sup> therefore, ought to understand clearly, that issues of creed must neither be subjected to human reasoning, nor be decided on the basis of "give and take" argument. Rather, it is incumbent upon every Muslim in any part of the world to adhere to the creed held by Allāh's Messengers and Prophets, and believe in those principles they all believed in and invited people to, without doubt or hesitation.

﴿أَمَّنْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَّبِيعٍ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ مَنْ يُّقْرَئُ وَمُكَثِّفُوهُ وَكُلُّهُو وَرَسُولُهُ لَا  
يُنَزِّهُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ وَرَسُولٌ وَمَا كُلُّ أُنْبِتٌ وَمَا أَعْنَتْ عَنْهُ إِلَّا كَمْ رَأَى وَإِلَيْنَا الْمُصِيرُ﴾

**The Messenger** has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and (so have) the believers. All of them did believe in Allāh, His angels, His Books and His Messengers [saying], We make no distinction between any of His Messengers. And they say, We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your Forgiveness, our Lord, and to you is the [ultimate] return. (*al-Baqarah*: 285).

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1- The word *Mu'min* literally means a believer, but whenever used alongside the word Muslim it denotes a level of faith higher than that of an ordinary Muslim. (Translator)

Such is the behaviour of the believers and their way of life—belief, submission, compliance and acceptance. Any believing Muslim with these qualities will be safe and secure and shall live in peace, with tranquillity and a purified mind. He will also be totally free from contradiction, confusion, scepticism, illusion, irresolution and indecision, all of which are commonly the characteristics of those who have gone astray as a result of their false belief.

Holding a sound belief with firmly established fundamentals, flawless bases and strong rules, is the only time-tested factor that can bring about happiness, dignity and prosperity for mankind, both in this life and in the life to come. This belief has clearly defined landmarks, most accurate proofs and faultless evidence. It is, in addition, absolutely compatible with human nature, sound minds and unimpaired hearts.

The entire Muslim world is, therefore, in dire need of getting familiar with this unadulterated belief, being the axis around which their welfare revolves, and the permanent place of their salvation.

In this book, even as concise as it is, the readers will find the indispensable fundamentals of the Islamic creed, its most important foundations and most prominent principles and features, coupled with proofs and many pieces of evidence. Thus, it is a book consisting of **the foundations of Faith in the light of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah**. Such important principles handed down to us by the Messengers, are so evident that any reasonable person, whether young or old, could easily assimilate them in a very short time. Success is, however, solely in the Hands of Allāh.

In this connection, we thank, profusely, the authors: Dr. Ṣāliḥ bin Sa‘d al-Suhaymi, Prof. ‘Abd al-Razzāq bin ‘Abd al-Muhsin al-‘Abbād and Dr. Ibrāhīm bin ‘Āmir al-Ruhayli. We also appreciate the efforts of the editing board made up of Prof. ‘Ali bin Muḥammad Nāṣir Faqīhi and Prof. Alīmad bin ‘Atiyyah al-Ghāmidi. Similarly, we thank the translator: Dr. ‘Abdur-Razzaq ‘Abdul-Majeed Alaro, as well as the translation's revision committee members: Dr. Haitham ‘Abdulaziz Saab and brother Taalib Alexander.

It is our hope that Allāh (ﷻ) will make this work fruitful for all Muslims, as we conclude our supplication saying, "Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of all beings".

**General Secretariat of  
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## Introduction

Obviously, every Muslim realises the importance of Faith (*Imān*), alongside the numerous gains and advantages it has for the faithful, both in this life and in the life after death. Without a sound faith, no worldly or heavenly benefit can be obtained; hence, it is the greatest of all demands, the most important purpose and the noblest of all aims. With Faith, man has a unique opportunity to lead a happy life and be safe from misfortunes, evils and difficulties. He will also be rewarded in the hereafter and live therein in eternal bliss and permanent comfort, which will neither expire nor vanish. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿فَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحِبِّبَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنُجْزِيَنَّهُمْ بِأَخْرَافِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer, We will surely cause him to lead a good life, and We shall certainly give them their reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do. (al-Nahl: 97).

﴿وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَإِذَا تَرَكَهُ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا﴾  
And whoever desires the hereafter and exerts the effort due to it while he is a believer- it is those whose effort is ever appreciated by [Allāh]. (al-Isrā': 19).

﴿وَمَنْ يَأْتِهِ مُؤْمِنًا فَقَدْ عَمِلَ الصَّالِحَاتِ فَإِذَا تَرَكَهُمْ لَهُمُ الْأَرْجُوتُ الْعُلُى﴾  
But whoever comes to Him as a believer, having done good deeds; for such will be the highest degrees. (Tâ-Hâ: 75).

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانُوا هُمْ جَئِنَتُ الْفَرْدَوْسِ نَزَلُوا ۚ﴾ خَلِيلِيْنَ فِيهَا لَا يَبْغُونَ عَنْهَا جُولَأَ ۝

Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds; they shall have the garden of Paradise as a lodging. Wherein they will abide forever, and shall not desire any transfer from it. (al-Kahf: 107, 108). Many other *ayahs* (i.e. verses) of the Glorious Qur'an have also spoken in the same tone.

Faith (*Imān*), according to proofs from both the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, is based on six principles. These are:

- 1- Belief in God (Allāh).
- 2- Belief in His Angels.
- 3- Belief in His Books.
- 4- Belief in His Messengers.
- 5- Belief in the Last Day.
- 6- Belief in Predestination, whether favourable or unfavourable.

The above articles of faith are mentioned in many places in the Book of Allāh as well as in the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ), including:

1- ﴿إِنَّمَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلٍ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكِتَابِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ فَقَدْ حَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾

1- O you who believe, believe<sup>(1)</sup> in Allāh and His Messenger and the Book He has revealed to His Messenger and that which He

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I- As for those who have believed already, they are being commanded here to confirm and adhere to their faith. (Translator)

had sent down before. Whoever disbelieves in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day has certainly wandered far astray. (al-Nisā': 136).

٤- ﴿لَيْسَ إِلَّا أَنْ تُولُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ فِي الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكُنَّ الْأَيْرَقَ مِنْ مَاءِنَنْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّيْنِعَنَ﴾.

2- Righteousness is not that you [merely] turn your faces to the east or the west<sup>(1)</sup>, but righteousness is [the quality of he] who believes in Allāh, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets... (al-Baqarah: 177).

٥- ﴿مَا أَمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّهُمْ مَا أَمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَكِيَّتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لَا يُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رَسُولِهِ وَكَلَّمَهُ أَوْ أَطْعَنَهُ أَعْفَرَ أَفْلَكَ رَبِّهِ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ﴾.

3- The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and (so have) the believers. All of them did believe in Allāh, His angels, His Books and His Messengers [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His Messengers. And they say, "We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your Forgiveness, our Lord, and to you is the [ultimate] return. (al-Baqarah: 285).

﴿إِنَّا كُلُّنَا عَلَىٰ حَلَقَتِهِ يُفَدَّرُ﴾ - ٤-

4- We have indeed created all things with predestination. (al-Qamar: 49).

١- i.e. in *salāh* (Prayer). (Translator)

5- 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) narrated, according to the famous *hadīth* of Jibrīl as reported by Muslim in his *Sahīh*<sup>(1)</sup>, that Angel Jibrīl (Gabriel) asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about Faith. He replied,

(أَن تُرِّمَنْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكِبَرِيهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَتُرِّمَنْ بِالْقَدْرِ خَمْرٌ وَشَرْدٌ).  
"[Faith is] to believe in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and in Predestination, whether auspicious or inauspicious". (*Sahīh Muslim*, *hadīth* no. 1).

These six great foundations or articles of Faith are indispensable. Furthermore, they are all inherent qualities of Faith; no part of them can be separated from the other. Believing in any of them, therefore, presupposes belief in the rest, while to have disbelieved in any, equally amounts to being an unbeliever in all. Hence, every Muslim must attach importance to the articles of Faith, both in learning them and in acting in line with their teachings.

In the following pages, we shall discuss the first article of Faith, viz. the Belief in God (Allāh).

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I- *Sahīh* is the name given to certain books or compilations of the *hadīth* or prophetic tradition, which are regarded to be most authentic. (Translator)

## SECTION ONE: BELIEF IN ALLĀH

The prime article of Faith and its most important foundation is to believe in Allāh (ﷻ), while the remaining articles are only branches or subdivisions of this.

To have faith in Allāh means believing in His uniqueness regarding lordship, divinity, as well as names and attributes, as these elements represent the bases of the belief in Allāh. Furthermore, Islam, the true religion is also known as *Tawhīd*, for it is based on believing in the oneness of God regarding His sovereignty and acts; His essence, names and attributes; and His being an object of worship. It is thus, inferable from this that the *Tawhīd* professed by the Prophets and Messengers of Allāh has three ramifications, namely:

### 1- *Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah* (Oneness of Lordship).

This indicates believing in Allāh (ﷻ) as the Lord and Possessor of everything; its Creator and Provider, who gives life and has the power to revoke it. The Beneficent, who is also capable of inflicting harm, and it is only He who responds favourably to invocation in hard times. He has control of all matters; every goodness is at His disposal, and to Him everything shall return. No partner has He in any of the aforementioned qualities.

### 2- *Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah* (Oneness of Divinity).

This means worshipping only Allāh with all forms of worship, such as submission, humility, and adoration, reverence, bowing down, prostration, sacrificial offering, and vow. None should be associated with Him in any of these acts.

**3- *Tawhīd al-Asmā' wa al-Sifāt* (Oneness of Names and Attributes).**

That is to believe in the exclusive possession by Allāh, of names and attributes attributed to Him either in His Glorious Book or in the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ). This also entails exalting Him above any defect or shortcoming, and not to liken Him to any of His creatures in anything known to be His special quality. Moreover, the believer must believe in Allāh's knowledge of all things, and His ability to do whatever He wants. That He is the Ever-living, who sustains and protects all beings, and neither drowsiness nor sleep overtakes Him. His Volition is all-time effective, and His Wisdom always far-reaching. The All-hearing, All-seeing God. The Compassionate, the Merciful, who rose over the mighty Throne, and has full grip on His dominion. The King and the Holy; He is totally free from defects and is the Giver of security. The Overwhelming, the Almighty, the Compeller and the Supreme; Glory be to Him, and exalted is He above all that they ascribe to Him as partners. All of these and other most beautiful names and lofty attributes of Allāh must be believed in.

There are numerous proofs from both the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet on each of the aforementioned divisions of *Tawhīd*. Indeed, the Glorious Qur'ān as a whole is all about *Tawhīd*, its rights, as well as gains of being a monotheist. In addition to the issue of *Shirk* (Polytheism), the polytheists and their punishment.

Muslim scholars have deduced the three branches of *Tawhīd* after thorough exploration and close examination of related Qur'ān and *Sunnah* texts. This has led them to conclude that mankind are required to believe in oneness of Allāh regarding His lordship, divinity, names and attributes. Anyone who fails to believe in this is an unbeliever. A more detailed explanation of the three divisions of *Tawhīd* will now follow.

## Chapter One: Oneness of Lordship (*Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah*)

### 1.1 Meaning and proofs from the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, as well as rational and instinctive proofs

#### 1.1.1 Meaning:

a) Linguistically, the word *rubiibiyah* is the verbal noun of '*rababa*', from which another word '*rabb*' has been derived. The term '*al-Rubūbiyyah*', on the other hand, is an attribute of Allāh (ﷻ). Having been derived from the noun '*al-Rabb*' (i.e. Lord), which further suggests a host of meanings in the Arabic language, such as an owner of something, an obeyed master or sovereign, and a reformer.

b) *Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah* as a technical term, however, means believing that Allāh is one and unique in all His acts. These include His acts of creating, providing, possessing, shaping, bestowal and denial, benefiting and inflicting harm, as well as causing anyone or anything to live or die. His ability to preordain, His Sovereignty, Kindness, Perfect control and management, and all other acts ascribed exclusively to Him. One must believe in them all.

#### 1.1.2 Proofs

##### a) Qur'ānic proofs

Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ حَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عِصْمٍ قَرَبَهَا وَالْفَنِ في الْأَرْضِ رَدَّبَهُ أَنْ تَبَدَّلَ يَكُمْ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَأَرَكَنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَبْنَاهَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ نَعْجٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴾ هَذَا خَلْقُ اللَّهِ فَأَرَوْفُ مَا يَخْلُقُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِيَّهُ بَلِ الظَّانِيُّونَ فِي ضَلَالٍ شَيْءٌ ﴾

"He (Allāh) has created the heavens without any pillars that you see, and cast into the earth firm mountains, lest it should shake with you. He similarly dispersed, therein, moving creatures of all kinds. And We (Allāh) send down water from the sky, and We cause [plants] of every good kind to grow therein. This is the creation of Allāh . Show Me then, what those (whom you worship) beside Him have created. Rather, the wrongdoers are in clear error". (Luqmān: 10, 11).

﴿ أَمْ خَلَقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ شَيْءٌ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَاطِئُونَ ﴾

"Were they created by nothing, or were they themselves the creators"? (al-Tūr: 35).

#### b) Proofs from the *Sunnah*:

Ahmad and Abū Dawūd both narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah bin al-Shikhīr (رضي الله عنه)، that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(السَّيِّدُ اللَّهُ تَبارَكَ وَتَعَالَى ...).

"Allāh is the *Sayyid* (Master or Lord), glorified and exalted is He".

In another narration by Tirmidhī and others, the Prophet (ﷺ) once advised Ibn 'Abbas in the following way;

(... واعلم أنَّ الْأَمَةَ لَوْ اجتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفُرُوكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَنْفُرُوكُمْ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ، قَدْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ، وَإِنْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضْرُبُوكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَضْرُبُوكُمْ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ، قَدْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ، رَفِعْتُ الْأَقْلَامَ وَجَذَّتُ الصَّحَفَ).

"Know that if people were to unite to do you a favour, they could do that only to the extent of what Allāh has preordained for you. And were they to unite to inflict any harm on you, they could likewise do so only to the extent of what He has predestined to befall you. The pens are already withdrawn and the pages [of the book of fate] have dried up". (*Sunan al-Tirmidhī*: 2516 and the *Musnad* by *Aḥmad*; vol. i p. 307<sup>(1)</sup>).

c) Rational proof:

Allāh's existence, His exclusive qualities of lordship, and His absolute power and control over His creations are all indisputable even by the way of logical reasoning, which involves pondering over the signs of Allāh that are, at the same time, proofs of His existence. Reflecting on those signs and consequently deriving proof of Allāh's Lordship there from is usually done in different ways, the most common of which are:

- 1- Pondering over the signs of Allāh regarding creation of the human soul, otherwise known as: '**Evidence of the Human Soul**'.

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I- This is a sound tradition, according to al-Ḥākim, while Tirmidhī classified it as *ḥasan-sahīḥ*.

The human soul is one of Allāh's great signs suggesting clearly that He is the only and unique Lord, who has neither associates nor partners. Thus, He has said,

﴿ وَرِبُّكُمْ أَنْتَ أَنَّا لَهُ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

**And also in your selves [there are signs], will you not then see?** (al-Dhāriyāt; 21).

﴿ وَتَقْرِيرُهُمْ وَمَا سَوَّنُهُمْ ﴾

**And [by] the soul, and Him who perfected it.** (al-Shams; 7).

Anybody who reflects deeply on the marvellous work of Allāh as manifested in the very making of his own soul, will realize the existence of an All-wise, All-aware Lord and Creator. It is impossible for man to have created a drop of sperm, the genesis of his own creation. Neither is it conceivable that he himself converted the drop of sperm into a clot; nor that he transformed the clot into a little lump of flesh; nor that he fashioned the little lump into bones, or clothed the bones with flesh.

2- Reflecting on the signs of Allāh regarding the creation of the universe. This is also known as '**Evidence of the Universe**', and it constitutes another great sign of Allāh cogently indicating His Lordship. A Qur'ānic verse goes thus:

﴿ سَرِّيْهُمْ بِالْأَنْتَافِ وَرِبُّهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْيَنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ بِرَبِّكُمْ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّشَهِيدٌ ﴾

**We shall show them Our signs in the universe and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that it [This Qur'ān] is**

**the truth. Is it not sufficient in regard to your Lord that He is a Witness over all things? (Fuṣṣilat: 53).**

Whoever thinks deeply about the universe, the heaven and the earth, and all that is found therein, such as the stars, the sun, the moon, the mountains, the trees, the seas, and the rivers; furthermore, what encloses them all of night and day, and the impeccable running of the universe as a whole, will conclude that an entity of such magnitude must have a creator and administrator who is solely responsible for its running. Moreover, the more a sensible person ponders, with deep consideration, over these amazing and unprecedented creations of Allāh, the closer he comes to realizing that they are all created for the truth and with the truth. That they are scrolls of signs and books of evidence and proof of all what Allāh has informed us concerning Himself, and of His oneness.

A tradition has it that a group of people once came to argue with Imām Abū-Hanīfah<sup>(1)</sup> on the question of believing in Allāh as the only and unique Lord, (*Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah*). The Imām said to them, "Before we ever begin to talk on this issue, may I ask you to inform me of a boat found on the Tigris River, which leaves the coast by itself, gets itself filled with foodstuff and other things, and then returns to the coast and anchors also without the intervention of anyone"! The answer from the group was, "This is implausible,

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1- Imam Abū Ḥanīfah is one of the leading Muslim scholars after whom the four schools of Muslim law are named. The rest are Mālik, al-Shāfi'i and Ahmad bin Ḥanbal, may Allāh have mercy on them. (Translator)

absolutely impossible". At that point the Imām remarked: "If that is impossible in the case of an ordinary boat, how then can it be feasible with regard to the whole universe with all its heights and depths"?

Thus, Imām Abu-Hanīfah has highlighted the congruity of the universe, the accuracy of its making, and the perfection of its creation as clear evidence on the oneness and uniqueness of the Creator.

## 1.2. Believing in *Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah* alone cannot save the believer from punishment

As we have mentioned earlier, believing in oneness of Lordship is one of the three constituent parts of Islamic monotheism; no belief in the oneness of Allāh could, therefore, be valid without it. However, this aspect of *Tawhīd* has never been the purpose behind the coming of Allāh's Messengers to their people, and as such cannot alone earn a person immunity to Allāh's punishment, should he/she fail to supplement it with another inherent component of *Tawhīd*, which is *Tawhīd al-Ulāhiyyah*. Allāh says,

﴿ وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُم بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُم مُشْرِكُونَ ﴾

**And most of them believe not in Allāh except that they attribute partners [to Him].** (Yūsuf: 106).

The import here is that, even though most of them fulfil the requirement of *Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah* and thus believe in Allāh as their Lord, Creator and Provider, in whose Hands is the control of all affairs, yet they associate partners with Him through worshipping other things, such as idols that are neither capable of inflicting harm or extending benefit, nor have they the ability to bestow or deprive anyone of any good. What has been given here as the meaning of this verse is in fact a representation of the opinion of the *Mufassirūn* (Scholars who comment on the meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān) among the Companions of the Prophet as well as their followers.

Ibn ‘Abbās said, "It was part of their Faith to say, whenever they were asked: "Who created the heavens, the earth, and the mountains"? , 'Allāh', yet they were polytheists". In his remark, 'Ikrimah said, "If you ask them: "Who created them, the heavens and the earth"? , they answer, 'Allāh'. Their Faith is all about this, but they still worship others besides Him". Mujāhid, another prominent scholar also commented saying, "Their Faith was just what they declared of their belief in Allāh as their Creator, who sustains them and would eventually cause them to die. That was nevertheless, a faith coupled with *Shirk*, for they also worshipped other than Allāh". And in the words of 'Abd al-Rahmān bin Zayd bin Aslam bin Zayd, "No one worships something besides Allāh, unless he has certain belief in Him, and knows that He is his Lord, Creator and Provider, even though he associates partners with Him. Can't you reflect on how Prophet Ibrāhīm addressed his people saying,

﴿ قُلْ أَفَرَءِيشُ مَا كُنْتُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴾ ﴿ أَنْتُمْ عَذَّلُونَ ﴾ ﴿ إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ .

**See now that which you have been worshipping, you and your forefathers. They are all indeed an enemy to me, save the Lord of the worlds.** (al-Shu'arā': 75-77)<sup>(1)</sup>.

Sayings of our pious predecessors in this regard are numerous. Besides, pagans in the days of the Prophet (ﷺ) also believed in Allāh as their Lord, the Creator, the Provider, who controls and manage all

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I- Ibn Jarir, *al-Tafsīr* vol. vii pp. 312-313.

things. They were, however, unbelievers, on account of their worship, having set up with Allāh some associates whom they invoked and called upon for help, whenever they were in need.

In many places has the Glorious Qur'ān stated that the polytheists, in spite of their worshipping other deities, believe in the Lordship of Allāh (ﷻ). Allāh says in some of these instances,

﴿ وَلَيْسَ سَالِتَهُم مِّنْ خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَسَخْرَى النَّاسِ وَالْفَعْلَى لِغَنِيمَةٍ فَإِنْ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴾

And if you were to ask them: who created the heavens and the earth, and subjected the sun and the moon [to their appointed functions]? they would surely reply, 'Allāh'. How then are they turned away? (al-'Ankabūt: 61).

﴿ وَلَيْسَ سَالِتَهُم مِّنْ زَلْزَلٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَا هُوَ بِهِ أَرْضٌ مِّنْ يَعْتَدُ مَوْرِثَةً لِّلْجَنَاحِينَ أَللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴾

And were you to ask them: who causes water to come down from the sky, and revives therewith the earth after its death? They would certainly say, 'Allāh'. Say, "Praise be to Allāh"! But most of them have no sense. (al-'Ankabūt: 63).

﴿ وَلَيْسَ سَالِتَهُم مِّنْ خَلْقِهِمْ لِيَقُولُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَإِنْ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴾

And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say, 'Allāh'. How then are they turned away? (al-Zukhrūf: 87).

﴿ قُلْ لَمَّا نَرَى الْأَرْضَ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُشِّمْتْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ يَهُوَ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ الْمُكَوَّنَاتِ الْكَوْنِيْعَ وَرَبُّ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤٣﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ يَهُوَ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَنْقُوْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾ قُلْ مَنْ يَدْعُو مَكَوْنَتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِحِبْرٍ وَلَا يَعْلَمُ أَعْلَمُهُ إِنْ كُشِّمْتْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ يَهُوَ قُلْ فَإِنْ شَرَحُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

Say, "To whom belongs the earth and whoever is therein, if you know"? They will say, 'To Allāh'. Say, "Will you not then remember"? Say, "Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the great Throne"? They will say, "To Allāh [all that belongs]". Say, "Will you not then fear [Him]? Say, "In whose hands is the dominion over all things, He protects [the creation], but against Him there is no protection, if you know". They will say, "To Allāh [all that belongs]". Say, "How then are you distracted"? (al-Mu'minūn: 84-89).

At no time have the polytheists considered their idols to be the one sending the rain or providing the needs of Allāh's creatures. Neither did they believe that the idols have control of the affairs of the world. All this they regarded as distinctive qualities of Allāh, as they admitted that the idols they called upon instead of Him were ordinary creatures that could benefit or harm neither themselves nor their worshippers. Equally, they believed that those idols possessed neither death, nor life, nor the power to raise the dead, and that they even hear or see not. They acknowledged that the ability to do all this belongs only to Allāh, and that neither they nor their idols have any share of it. Furthermore, they held that Allāh alone is the Creator and the Lord, and all that exists besides Him are created by Him and under His control. Those polytheists, however, attributed to Allāh partners and intermediaries from His own creation, whom they thought could intercede with Him on their behalf and bring them closer to Him. On this, Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُولَةٍ أُولَئِكَ مَا عَبَدُوهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُغَرِّبُنَا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّنَا ﴿٤﴾

And those who choose protectors besides Allāh [say,] "We worship them only that they may bring us nearer to Him". (al-Zumar: 3), i.e. That they may intercede with Allāh on their behalf, to gain His provision and help in whatever may befall them of worldly calamities.

The polytheists were not regarded as Muslims, despite this general attestation concerning their belief in Allāh's Lordship. On the contrary, Allāh declared them unbelievers and polytheists, and threatened to punish them with the everlasting torment of Hell. While His Messenger (ﷺ) also declared killing them and confiscating their wealth as lawful, because of their failure to confirm their belief in Allāh's Lordship through worshipping Him alone.

It is thus clear that believing in Allāh's Lordship alone without believing in Him as the only object of worship is not enough and cannot save one from His punishment. Rather, such faith in Allāh's Lordship must be seen as substantial evidence indicating that religion should be solely for Allāh, and that mankind should worship none but Him alone.

### 1.3 Aspects of deviation concerning *Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah*

Human beings generally have natural dispositions to believe in the oneness of Lord, in addition to a wide range of evidence pointing to this as well. In spite of this, we could notice certain errors being committed by some people. A summary of those areas where people do deviate in this respect is given as follows:

1- Outright denial of Allāh's Lordship and disbelieving in His very existence constitutes a major aspect of this deviation. One could observe this in the attitudes of atheists who see Allāh's creations as mere manifestations of nature or just a consequence of time vicissitude, or something of that kind. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

وَلَوْنَاتٍ هُنَّ لَا يَرَوْنَهُنَّ بَلْ يَرَوْنَهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنَّ اللَّهَ فَعَلَّ

**And they say, "There is nothing but our life in this world; we die and we live, and nothing but time destroys us".** (al-Jāthiyah: 24).

2- Another aspect of deviation in this regard is to deny some of Allāh's characteristics or part of the features of His Lordship. Such as when a person disbelieves in Allāh's power to cause him to die or to bring him back to life after his death. Or when he denies Allāh's ability to bring forth to him any good and repel any harm, etc.

3- A third way of this deviation is to give any of Allāh's qualities of Lordship to someone or something else. Thus, it is an act of *shirk* to regard something or someone as having a share with Allāh in His control of the universe regarding any facet of this control, such as creation and destruction; giving life to anyone and taking it back;

bringing about any benefit and warding off any evil, as well as all other features of Lordship.

## Chapter Two: Oneness of Divinity (*Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah*)

The word '*Ulūhiyyah*' is a derivative of *ilāh*, which means god or deity. *Al-Ilāh* (The Divine or God) is therefore one of the most beautiful names of Allāh (ﷻ), while *al-Ulūhiyyah* (Divinity) constitutes a great attribute of His. Accordingly, Allāh is the only true God whom every soul must worship, submit to, humiliate itself before, and comply fully with His injunctions, for He is the Great Lord who created the universe, and has its absolute control. He embodies every quality of perfection, and is free from any defect. Men should not submit or humiliate themselves before any other being save Allāh, who, alone, has created and originated all that exists, and has the exclusive power to reproduce them; hence, none but Him alone should be worshipped.

*Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah* is to worship none but Allāh, meaning that one should know for sure that Allāh alone and not any other being is worthy of worship. Moreover, the qualities and features of a divine nature are exclusively His, and none but He alone merits them.

Anyone who knows this and believes in it would make Allāh his only object of worship and serve Him with all forms of worship, noticeable and unnoticeable alike. Thus, you find him/her performing outward acts, such as *Salāh* (prayer), *Zakah* (compulsory almsgiving), *Siyām* (Fasting) and *Hajj* (Pilgrimage). He would be encouraging others to do what is right and forbid them to do what is wrong, be dutiful towards his parents and be kind to his relatives as well.

Similarly, such a person would not neglect the inward principles of religion, which are the belief in Allāh, in His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and in preordainment; whether favourable or unfavourable. His objective in doing all that will be nothing save to satisfy his Lord and gain His reward.

We shall now discuss in this chapter, some important issues relating to this aspect of *Tawhīd*.

## 2.1 Proofs and importance of *Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah*

### 2.1.1 Proofs

The proofs indicating the obligation of believing in Allāh as the only God who is worthy of worship are ample and numerous. They have also been expressed in a variety of ways as follows:

- a) A command may come in this regard, as expressed in the following verses:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الْأَنْفَاسُ اغْبُدُ وَارْبِكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَقَّنُ )

**O mankind! Worship your Lord who has created you and those before you, so that you may become pious.** (al-Baqarah: 21)

وَأَعْبُدُهُ وَإِلَهُكُمْ كُوَّابُكُمْ مُسْتَحْيِي

**Worship Allah, and ascribe none as partner to Him. (al-Nisâ': 36)**

وَقُصْنِيْرِيْكَ الْأَنْعَيْدَةِ وَالْأَيْتَادِ

And you [Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. (al-Isra': 23).

- b) Sometimes, the body of a Qur'anic text will illustrate this type of *Tawhid* as the basis of creation and the purpose of bringing mankind and *jinn* into existence. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

وَمَا حَلَقْتُ لِجَنَّ وَالْأَنْسَ إِلَّا يَعْبُدُونِي ﴿٩﴾

**And I created not the *jinn* and mankind except that they should worship Me.** (al-Dhāriyāt; 56).

- c) At times this aspect of *Tawhīd* is explained to be the motive for the coming of Allāh's Messengers. The Qur'ānic verses in this respect include:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِيبَ أَعْبَدُوا إِلَهًا وَاجْتَنَبُوا أَنْطَافَتْ ﴾

And indeed, We have raised in every nation a Messenger [proclaiming:] Worship Allāh and shun false gods. (al-Nahl: 36).

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا فُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا أَعْبُدُونِ ﴾

And We sent no Messenger before you unless We revealed to him [saying,] "There is no god worthy of worship but I, so worship Me". (al-Anbiyā'; 25).

- d) At some other times, this form of *Tawhīd* is described as the purpose of Allāh's revelations. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ يَرِئُ اللَّهُكُمْ بَالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ أَنْ يَتَذَكَّرُ إِلَهٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا إِنَّمَا تَأْتِيُونَ ﴾

He [Allāh] sends down the angels with the revelation of His command to whomever He wills among His servants that 'Warn [my creatures]; there is no god worthy of worship but I, therefore fear Me'. (al-Nahl: 2).

- e) Sometimes, this may take the form of an explanation of the tremendous gains, ample reward, and generous grace Allāh has for whoever believes in this aspect of *Tawhīd*, both in this life and in the life to come. Thus, a Qur'ānic verse reads as follows:

الَّذِينَ كَامِنُوا وَلَمْ يَكُنُوا مُبَيِّنِهِمْ بِظُلْمٍ أَوْ لِتَبَدُّلِهِمْ أَمْ أَنْ يَأْتُمُوهُمْ مُهَمَّدٌ وَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

Those who believe and obscure not their faith with *zulm*<sup>(1)</sup>, theirs is security, and they are rightly guided. (al-An'ām: 82).

f) Another way this is usually explained is to warn against its opposite. This may also involve mentioning the risk involved in doing the opposite, as well as what Allāh has kept in reserve as punishment for those who ignore this *Tawhīd*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

إِنَّمَا مَنْ يُشْرِكُ بِآثَارَهُ فَقَدْ حَرَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا وَرَاهُ أَنَّهَا رَوْمَادٌ وَمَا يَلْظَلِيمُ إِنَّمَا  
أَنْصَارُهُ ﴿٧٣﴾

Whoever associates partners with Allāh, for such Allāh has indeed forbidden Paradise, and his abode will be Fire. For wrongdoers there will be no helpers. (al-Mā'idah: 72).

وَلَا تَحْمِلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَتَلْقَى فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَا لَمْ يُحْكُمْ لَهُ مَذْهَبُهُ رَبِّهِ ﴿٣٩﴾

Do not set up with Allāh any other god, lest you be cast into Hell, reproved and abandoned. (al-Iṣrā': 39).

This and many other types of proof affirm the belief in oneness of Allāh. They similarly contain an invitation to it, as well as reference to its virtue, reward, and the severity of the punishment, which acting in contrast to it may entail.

There are still in the Prophetic tradition many other proofs with respect to this *Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah* and its importance. They include:

1- Linguistically, the word '*zulm*' means wrong, injustice, oppression etc. But here it denotes *shirk* or worshipping other than Allāh, as has been clarified in a *ḥadīth*. (Translator)

1- According to Bukhārī in his *hadīth* compilation, Mu'ādh bin Jabal (رضي الله عنهما) narrated saying, "The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "O Mu'ādh! Do you know the right Allāh has over His servants"? Mu'ādh replied, "Allāh and His Messenger know best". The Prophet then said, "To worship Him alone, associating none as partners with Him. Do you also know what is due to them from Him"? Mu'ādh said, "Allāh and His Messenger know best". The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Not to punish them [if it is He alone they worship]". (*Bukhārī*: 7373).

2- Ibn 'Abbas (رضي الله عنهما) narrated saying, as the Prophet (ﷺ) was sending Mu'ādh on a mission to Yemen, he told him,

(أَنْكُمْ تَقْدِمُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ فَلَا يَكُنْ أُولَئِكَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يُوحِّدُوا إِلَهَهَهُمْ، فَإِذَا عَرَفُوا ذَلِكَ فَلَا يَخِرُّهُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ فَرِضَ عَلَيْهِمْ خَمْسَ صَلَواتٍ...).

You are going to a nation of the People of the Book. The first thing to which you should invite them is to believe that Allāh is one and only. If they appear to have known this, then inform them of the five[daily] prayers Allāh has enjoined on them... (*Bukhārī*: 7372).

3- Another *hadīth* reported by Ibu Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنهما) quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(مَنْ مَاتَ وَهُوَ يَدْعُو مِنْ دُرُونَ اللَّهِ تَدْأُ دَخْلُ النَّارِ).

Whoever dies while still invoking something other than Allāh<sup>(1)</sup> as a rival to Him, such a person will be admitted into Hell-fire.

(*Bukhārī*: 4497).

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1- i.e. worshipping something or someone of Allāh's creatures. *Du'a'* or invocation is an act of worship. (Translator)

4- Jābir bin ‘Abdullah (رض) also narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(مَنْ لَقِيَ اللَّهَ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئاً دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ، وَمَنْ لَقِيَهُ يُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئاً دَخَلَ النَّارَ).

**Anyone who meets Allāh [at death], associating no partner with Him will be admitted into Paradise. But whoever meets Him and is a polytheist, he/she will enter Hell-fire.** (*Muslim*: 93).

The *hadīths* relating to this issue are numerous.

### 2.1.2 *Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah* as the core of all divine missions

No doubt, believing in Allāh as the only God who is worthy of worship is the greatest of all principles. It is also the most perfect, most superior and most imperative for mankind's welfare. Both mankind and *jinn*, and all other creatures have been created, just as the divine laws have been ordained for the purpose of fulfilling the obligation of this *Tawhīd*. With the *Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah* righteousness prevails, and without it evil and perversion will be the order of the day. Hence, it has been the essence of the mission of Allāh's Messengers, the objective of their message, and the foundation of their *Da'wah*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَثَّنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِيبَ أَعْذِرَ رَبَّهُ وَاجْتَنَبَ الْكُفُورَ﴾.

And indeed, We have raised in every nation a Messenger [proclaiming:] "Worship Allāh and shun false gods". (al-Nāhl: 36).

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ بِنَصْرٍ إِلَّا نُوحِنَّ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا أَنَا أَنْعَمُونَ﴾.

And We sent no Messenger before you unless We revealed to him [saying,] "There is no god worthy of worship but I, so worship Me". (al-Anbiyā': 25).

The Glorious Qur'ān has in so many places indicated that the *Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah* was the key of all divine missions, adding that every messenger of Allāh did start his mission by calling his people to the belief in Allāh's oneness and to worship none but Him. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَإِنْ عَادَ لَغَافِرُهُمْ هُودًا قَالَ يَنْقُوُهُمْ أَعْبَدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُهُ﴾

And to [the tribe of] ‘Ād [We sent] their brother, Hūd, who said, "O my people! Worship Allāh, you have no other god worthy of worship but Him". (al-A’rāf: 65).

﴿وَإِنْ تَمُودُ أَخَاهُمْ صَدِيقَهُمْ قَالَ يَنْقُوُهُمْ أَعْبَدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُهُ﴾

And to [the tribe of] Thamūd [We sent] their brother, Ṣālib, who said, "O my people! Worship Allāh, you have no other god worthy of worship but Him". (al-A’rāf: 73).

﴿وَإِنِّي مُذَكَّرٌ لِأَخَاهُمْ شَعَبَيْهَا قَالَ يَنْقُوُهُمْ أَعْبَدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُهُ﴾

And to [the people of] Midian [We sent] their brother, Shu‘aib, who said, "O my people! Worship Allāh, you have no other god worthy of worship but Him". (al-A’rāf: 85).

### 2.1.3 *Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah* as the bone of contention between Allāh's Messengers and their people

We have mentioned earlier that this *Tawhīd* has been the starting point for all divine missions. There was never a Messenger sent by Allāh who had not started his mission with an invitation to the belief in His oneness. The disputes between the Messengers and their respective people were, therefore, centred around this aspect of Faith. The Prophets asked them to believe in one and only God (Allāh) and to worship none but Him, while they, on their part, insisted on shirk and idolatry, except those of them whom Allāh had shown the right way. Regarding this, Almighty Allāh said of the people of Nūh (ﷺ),

﴿وَقَالُوا لَا نَدْرِنَ مَا تَنْهَنَ وَلَا نَذْرَنَ وَلَا سُوَاعَ وَلَا يَغْرِبَ وَبَعْرَقَ وَسَرَرٌ ﴾ ٢٣ ﴿ وَقَدْ أَحْصَلُوا كَثِيرًا  
وَلَا يَرُدُّ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا حَسَلًا ﴾

And they said, "Forsake not your gods. Forsake not *Wadd*, nor *Suwā'*, nor *Yagāth*, nor *Ya'āq*, nor *Nasr*<sup>(1)</sup>". And they have indeed led many astray. [O Allāh!] May You increase the wrongdoers in nothing save error. (Nūh: 23-24).

Allāh also said concerning the people of Hūd (ﷺ);

﴿ قَالُوا أَجْعَنَنَا لِئَلَّا فَكَانَ عَنْ مَا هَبَّنَا فَأَيْنَا بِمَا تَعْدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴾

They said, "Have you come to turn us away from our gods? Bring upon us then that which you threaten us with, if you are of the truthful". (al-Aḥqāf : 22).

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I- These are names of the idols they worshipped then.

﴿ قَالُوا يَتَهْوِدُ مَا جَعَلْنَا يُبَيِّنُونَ وَمَا عَنِّيْنَا إِسْكَارِيَّةٌ مَا لَهُمْ بِنَا عَنْ فَوْلَكَ وَمَا عَنِّيْنَا لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴾

They said, "O Hūd! You have brought us no clear proof, and we shall not forsake our gods on your [mere] saying, and neither are we going to believe in you". (Hūd: 53).

And of the people of Shālih (ﷺ), He has also said,

﴿ قَالُوا يَصْنَعُونَ فَذَكَرَتْ رِفَاهَا مَرْجُوا قَبْلَ هَذَا أَنْ تَهْمَسْنَا أَنْ تَبْعَدْ مَا يَقْبَلُ مَا بَأْتَ أَنْتَ وَإِنَّا لَقَى شَرَكَ مَمَّا نَدَعُونَا إِلَيْهِ مُرْسِلِيْنَ ﴾

They said, "O Shālih! Hitherto, you have been a figure of good hope among us. Do you [now] ask us not to worship what our fathers used to worship? Really, we are in deed in serious doubt concerning that to which you call us". (Hūd: 62).

While of the people of Shu'aib (ﷺ) Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ قَالُوا يَشْعَبُ أَصْلَوْنَاكَ تَأْمِنُكَ أَنْ تَرْكَ مَا يَقْبَلُ مَا بَأْتَنَا أَوْ أَنْ تَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ ﴾

They said, "O Shu'aib! Does your prayer command you that we should abandon what our fathers used to worship, or that we should give up doing what we like with our own property? You are indeed, the mild, the rightly guided"! (Hūd: 87).

He also said regarding the unbelievers among the tribe of Quraish<sup>(1)</sup>:

﴿ وَرَجُلُوْنَ أَنْ جَاءُهُمْ مُتَدَدِّرِيْنَ وَقَالَ الْكُفَّارُ هَذَا سِحْرٌ كَذَابٌ ۝ أَجْعَلَ الْأَكْلَهُ إِلَيْهِارِجِيْدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَئُنْ وَمُجَابٌ ۝ وَأَطْلَقَ الْكَلَامَيْنِهِمْ لَيْ أَمْشِوْا وَأَصْبِرُوا عَلَىْ مَا لَهُمْ كُثُرٌ إِنَّ هَذَا لَئُنْ وَمُسْرَدٌ ۝ مَا يَعْنِيْنَا بِهَذَا فِي الدِّيَنِ وَالْآخِرَةِ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَنْ خَلَقْنَا ۝ ﴾

I- Quraish is the prominent Meccan tribe to which the Prophet (ﷺ) himself belonged.

And they wonder that a warner from among themselves has come to them, and the infidels say, "This is a sorcerer, an outright liar. Makes he the gods one God? This is, indeed, a curious thing". The chiefs among them went about [exhorting], "Go and be staunch to your gods, this is really something designed [against you]. We have not heard of this in the religion of these later days. This is nothing but an invention". (Sâd: 4-7).

﴿وَلَذَا رَأَوْكَ إِن يَتَجَدَّدُونَكَ إِلَّا هُرِزُوا أَهْنَدَا الَّذِي بَعَثَ اللَّهُ رَسُولًا ﴿١٦﴾ إِن كَانَ لِيُضْلِلُنَا عَنِ الْهُدَىٰ لَوْلَا فَأَنْصَبَنَا عَلَيْهَا وَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ حِينَ كَيْدُونَ الْعَذَابَ مِنْ أَضْلَلُ سَيِّلًا ﴿١٧﴾ أَرَيْتَ مِنْ أَنْخَذَ إِلَهًا هُوَنَهُ أَفَكُنْ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٨﴾ أَمْ تَحْسِبُ أَنَّ أَنْخَرُهُمْ يَسْعَوْنَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُوْنَ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَغْنَمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضْلَلُ سَيِّلًا ﴿١٩﴾﴾

And when they see you [Muhammad] they treat you only in mockery [saying,] "Is this he whom Allâh has sent as a messenger? He would have almost misled us from our gods, had we not been steadfast [in worshipping] them". They will know, when they view the punishment, who is more astray concerning the [right] path. Have you seen him who adopted his own whims as his god, Would you then be a guardian over him? Or do you assume that most of them hear or understand? They are but as cattle, nay, they are farther astray! (al-Furqân: 41- 44).

The aforementioned texts and other similar ones are clear indications that the belief in one divine God and invitation to an unadulterated religion have been the main subject of disagreement between the Messengers of Allâh and the people of their time.

The prophet (ﷺ) said, as narrated in an authentic *hadīth*,

(أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَقْاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهِدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّداً رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَيَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيَزِّعُوا الزَّكَاةَ، فَإِذَا فَعَلُوْا ذَلِكَ عَصَمُوا مِنْ دَمَاهُمْ وَأَمْوَالُهُمْ إِلَّا بِحُكْمِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَحْسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ).

"I have been ordered to fight people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh, and that Muḥammad is Allāh's Messenger, and perform (obligatory) *salah* (prayer), and pay obligatory alms (*zakah*). If they do, then their lives and properties are safe, except in operation of any other Islamic injunction<sup>(1)</sup>, and their reckoning will be with Allāh". (*Bukhāri*: 25; *Muslim*: 22).

Another authentic tradition has it that the Prophet (ﷺ) also said,

(مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَكَفَرَ بِمَا يُعَدُّ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حُرُمٌ مَالُهُ وَدَمُهُ وَحِسَابُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ).

"Whoever proclaims "*La ilāha illa Allāh*" (None, but Allāh has the right to be worshipped), and has disbelieved in all other objects of worship besides Allāh, his/her life and property are thus protected, and to Allāh [alone] he/she will account [for his/her actions]". (*Muslim*: 23).

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I- That is, any other cause that may necessitate the opposite in any given circumstance, such as murder for example. (Translator)

## 2.2 To worship none but Allāh alone is an obligation

### 2.2.1 Meaning of worship ('ibādah) and its foundations

In a strict linguistic sense, the word 'ibādah in Arabic means submission and humility. Hence, it is commonly said "ba 'ir mi 'abba'd" for a docile camel, as a mark of its humiliation, and "qariq mu 'abba'd" for a smooth or passable road, to indicate a beaten track.

In Islamic terms, 'ibādah or worship encompasses all manifest or hidden acts and sayings that Allāh loves or assents to. This will be further explained when we mention in this book some forms of worship at a later stage.

Worship in Islam has three basic elements, namely:

1- Complete love for Allāh (ﷻ). A Qur'anic verse says,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ مَا فَرَقُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ بَلْ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ﴾

**As for those who have believed, they love Allāh more [than any other being].** (al-Baqarah: 165).

2- Absolute hope. Allāh, the Almighty, says in another verse,

﴿وَرَبُّكُمْ رَحِيمٌ﴾

**And they hope for His (Allāh's) Mercy.** (al-Isrā': 57).

3- Total fear of His Punishment. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَعَذَابُهُ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ﴾

**And they fear His punishment.** (al-Isrā': 57).

An indication to these three elements of worship, combined together, appears in the opening *sūrah* (chapter) of the Glorious Qur'ān, where Allāh (ﷻ) says,

الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١﴾ اَرْحَمَ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ مَوْلٰى وَرَبِّ الْجِنَّٰتِ ﴿٣﴾

**Praise be to Allāh the Lord of all beings. The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Owner of the Day of Reckoning.** (al-Fātiḥah; 2-4).

The first verse expresses "love", for Allāh (ﷻ) is a Benefactor, and a benefactor is usually admired in accordance with the extent of his benefit. The second verse speaks of "hope", as we know that people usually hope for the mercy of anyone described as being merciful. While the third verse implies "fear", for there is tendency for anyone to fear the punishment of He who owns reckoning and recompense.

Thus, the clause following the above quoted verses immediately reads: ﴿۱۲۳﴾ You alone we worship. Meaning, in other words, I worship You alone O my Lord with all these elements; with my love for you as implied in "Praise be to Allāh the Lord of all beings", in anticipation of Your mercy as indicated in the phrase: "**The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful**", and out of fear of your punishment, as evident in the phrase: "**Owner of the Day of Reckoning**".

For an act of worship to be approved of by Allāh it must fulfil two conditions:

1- Sincerity to Allāh, the object of worship. Allāh (ﷻ) approves of no act of worship except when done exclusively for His sake. He says,

﴿وَمَا أُرْسَلْتُ إِلَّا يَعْبُدُونَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الْأَيْمَانُ﴾

And they were ordered nothing except to worship Allāh, keeping religion exclusively for Him. (al-Bayyinah: 5).

﴿إِنَّ الْأَئِمَّةَ هُمُ الْمُحَاذِنُونَ﴾

Surely, the pure religion is for Allāh alone. (al-Zumar: 3).

﴿فِي اللَّهِ أَعْبُدُ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ وَبِنِي﴾

Say, "Allāh alone I do worship, sincere to Him in my religion".  
(al-Zumar: 14).

2- Following in the footsteps of the Prophet (ﷺ); no act is acceptable to Allāh unless it conforms to the teachings of His Messenger (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِرَسُولٍ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانهُرُوا﴾

And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it. And whatever he forbids for you, abstain [from it]. (al-Hashr: 7).

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا بِحُكْمِكُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حُرجًا فَمَا فَصَّلَتْ وَيُسْلِمُوا قَسْلِمًا﴾

But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith until they make you [i.e. Muhammad] judge of what is in dispute between them, and find thereupon, within themselves, no discomfort from your verdict, but accept [such] with full submission. (al-Nisā': 65).

And in the words of the Prophet (ﷺ) himself:

(من أحدث في أمرنا هذا ما ليس منه فهو رد)

"Whoever introduces into this religion of ours something alien to it, such an invention will be rejected". (i.e. it is inadmissible).

(Bukhāri: 2697).

Based on that, any act of worship that is void of either sincerity to Allāh or compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) is meaningless. A renowned Muslim scholar, Fudail bin ‘Iyād -may Allāh have mercy on him- remarked, with reference to Almighty Allāh's saying,

﴿لِتُبَتَّلَ مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

**That He may try you, which of you is best in deed.** (Hūd: 7, al-Mulk: 2), "That is the most sincere and most correct deed". It was said to him: O Abu ‘Ali, which act is the most sincere and most unerring? He replied, "A sincere but incorrect act is unacceptable to Allāh, just as no accurate act would be approved of by Him unless its probity is proven. A sincere act is that which has been done for the sake of Allāh, and the correct act is the one performed in accordance with the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ)<sup>(1)</sup>".

Qur'ānic verses containing evidence on the above mentioned conditions include the word of Allāh in the close of *sūrah al-Kahf* (Chapter 18 of the Glorious Qur'ān) which reads as follows:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ فَنَذَرْتُ لِيُوحَنَّ إِلَيْنِي أَنَّمَا إِنْهَاكُمْ إِلَّهٌ وَرَبُّكُمْ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو نَفْعًا لِفَلَّاهٍ رَبِّيهِ فَلَا يَعْمَلْ عَلَيْهِ سَلِيمًا وَلَا يُنَزِّلُ لَهُ بِعْدَادَةً رَبِّيَّهُ أَحَدًا﴾

**Say [O Muḥammad], "I am only a human being like you, to whom has been revealed that your God is one God. Therefore, whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and not associate in the worship of his Lord [Allāh] anyone".** (al-Kahf: 110).

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1- *Jaṣīdat al-Awliyā'* vol. viii p. 95.

### 2.2.2 Forms of worship

Worship (*Ibādah*) is of numerous types. Any righteous deed or utterance whether manifest or concealed is regarded as a branch of worship, provided that such is loved and assented to by Allāh (ﷻ). We shall now mention some examples as follows:

- 1- **Supplication (Du'ā')**, Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿فَادْعُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الظَّنِّ﴾

Therefore, supplicate Allāh, making the religion pure for Him. (al-Gāfir: 14).

﴿وَأَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا﴾

And the mosques are only for Allāh, none should you, therefore, invoke along with Him. (al-Jinn: 18).

﴿وَمَنْ أَصْلَى مِنْ يَدْعُوا مِنْ دُوَيْنَ اللَّهُ مَنْ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَهُمْ عَنْ دُعَائِيهِمْ غَافِلُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِذَا حُسِرَ الْأُنْسُ كَانُوا هُمْ أَعْنَاءُ وَكَانُوا يُبَارِدُونَ كُفَّارِينَ ﴾﴾

And who is more astray than he who invokes, instead of Allāh, such that will not answer him until the Day of Resurrection, and are [even] unaware of their invocation. And when [on the Day of Reckoning] the people are gathered, they will become enemies to them and deny having been worshipped by them. (al-Ahqāf: 5-6).

Whoever invokes a living or non-living being, other than Allāh, asking him/it to provide something that none but Allāh, alone, could provide has become a disbelieving polytheist. Asking a living fellow human being to render a service he/she is capable of rendering is, however, a blameless act. Such as saying to him/her, 'Give me something to eat or to drink', etc. It must be added that, even such a permissible request may not be directed to a dead or an absent

creature, who are not in a position to provide anything for anyone; hence, invoking them makes one a polytheist.

There are two types of supplication (*dū'ā'*), namely *Dū'ā' al-Mas'ūlah* and *Dū'ā' al-Ibādah*. The former is a supplication made to request for a terrestrial or celestial benefit from Allāh, while the latter refers to supplication with mere intention of worshipping Allāh, and it involves any open or secret pious act. It is understandable that a worshipper usually asks Allāh, either by spoken word or silent expression, for his act of worship to be accepted, and for he to be rewarded for that.

Any Qur'ānic statement commanding us to make invocation [to Allāh]; forbidding us to invoke any other being; or praising those who invoke Him, refers to both types of invocation as mentioned above.

**2, 3, 4- Love, Fear, and Hope** are also acts of worship. As we have mentioned earlier, the three represent the basic elements of worship.

**5- Reliance on something.** This means, with regard to Allāh, entrusting Him faithfully with all matters through dependence on Him and putting one's trust in Him, without ignoring the pursuit of whatever means He has made lawful for attainment of benefits or prevention of damages. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِنَّ كُلَّ مُؤْمِنٍ يَرْجُو  
﴿

**And in Allāh you must put your trust if you are indeed believers.**  
(al-Mā'idah: 23).

(٣) وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسِيبٌ ۝

**And whoever puts his trust in Allāh, He is sufficient for him. (al-Talāq: 3).**

## 6, 7, 8- Desire, Fright, and Reverence

Desire is a wish to have something you love, fright denotes a fear that culminates in flight from horrible things, while reverence indicates a feeling of humility and submissiveness to Allāh's sublimity, which makes one submit voluntarily to both His general and specific pre-ordinaments<sup>(1)</sup>. A saying of Allāh (ﷻ) stating all these three forms of worship goes thus:

﴿إِنَّمَا كَانُوا يُكْرِهُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَكَ رَغْبًا وَرَهْبًا وَكَانُوا لَا  
يُشْعِرُونَ﴾

**They used to hasten to do good deeds, even as they invoke Us with desire and fear, and were submissive to Us. (al-Anbiyā': 90)**

9- **Anxiety.** This is a feeling of nervousness resulting from one's knowledge of the majesty and absolute authority of whom he fears. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

**فَلَا تُخْتَوِهُمْ وَلَا تُخْتَوِنِ**

**So fear them not, but fear Me.** ( al-Baqarah: 150; al- Mâ'idah: 3).

**10-** Turning to Allāh in repentance; by being obedient to Him and avoiding acts of disobedience. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

1- Allāh's pre-ordination is of two types, namely *Kawni* and *Shar'i*. The former is general affecting all His creatures, while the latter is specific as it concerns only what Allāh approves of or assents to. (Translator)

وَإِنِّي مُوْلَىٰ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُ إِلَيْهِمْ

And to your Lord you should turn repentant, and submit. (al-Zumar: 54).

11- Seeking Allāh's help in any attempt to achieve religious or worldly benefits. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

إِنَّا لَنَعْبُدُ وَإِنَّا لَنَسْأَلُ

You (Allāh) alone we worship and You alone we ask for help. (al-Fātiḥah: 5). The Prophet (ﷺ) also said in his advice for Ibn ‘Abbās, [His cousin]:

(إِذَا سَأَلْتُمْ فَامْسِأْنُ بِاللَّهِ)

"When you ask for help, ask none but Allāh". (*Sunan al-Tirmidhi*: 2516; *Musnad Ahmad* vol. I p. 307)<sup>(1)</sup>.

12- To take refuge in something or, in other words, seek protection from a misfortune. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

فَلَأَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ① مِنْ شَرِّ مَا حَلَقَ

Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of Daybreak. From the evil of that which He created". (al-Falaq: 1-2)

فَلَأَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ② مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ③ إِنَّهُوَ أَكْبَرُ ④ مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ  
الْخَنَّاسِ ⑤

Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind. The King of mankind. The God of mankind. From the evil of the sneaking whisperer". (al-Nās: 1-4).

13- Calling for help in order to be salvaged from hardship or destruction. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

I- This is a *ḥasan* (fairly sound) *hadīth*, according to Tirmidhi, but *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) in the opinion of al-Hākim.

﴿إِذْ تَسْأَلُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجِبْ لَهُمْ﴾

When you sought help of your Lord and He answered you. (al-Anfal: 9).

**14-** Slaughtering of animals in a particular way with the intention of pleasing Allāh. Some Qur'ānic verses go thus:

﴿فَلَمَّا أَتَى صَلَاتِي وَمُكَبَّرِي وَمَعَافِقِي لَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

Say, "My *Salāh* (Prayer), my animal sacrifices, my living and my dying are indeed for Allāh, Lord of the worlds". (al-An'ām: 162).

﴿فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَلَا هُنْ بِغُصَّةٍ﴾

Perform *Salāh* (Prayer) for your Lord and sacrifice [an animal]. (al-Kawthar: 2).

**15-** **Vow.** This means deliberate imposition of an act or a non-obligatory religious observance on oneself. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿جُوَفُونَ بِالنَّدْرِ وَعَجَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانُ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا﴾

They [are those who] fulfil [their] vow and fear a day whose evil will be widespread. (al-Insān: 7).

The foregoing are just examples of the acts of worship, which are all exclusive possessions of Allāh (ﷻ) alone, and should not be devoted to any other being.

Acts of worship, in terms of parts of the human body used in performing them, are divisible into three:

a) Acts relating to the heart, such as love, fear, hope, returning to Allāh in repentance, anxiety, fright, and putting one's trust in Allāh, etc.

b) Verbal acts, such as saying '*Alhamdulillah*' (Praise be to Allāh), '*La ilāha illa Allāh*', (There is no god worthy of worship save Allāh), '*Subhān Allāh*' (Glorified be Allāh), or asking for Allāh's forgiveness, as well as recitation of the Glorious Qur'ān, supplication, etc.

c) Acts relating to the limbs. These include *Salāh* (prayer), fasting, *Zakāh* (obligatory alms), pilgrimage, charity, fighting in the cause of Allāh, etc.

### 2.3 The Prophet's (ﷺ) safeguarding of *Tawhīd*

The Prophet (ﷺ), out of concern for his followers, was very keen to see them a strong and well fortified nation, who would fulfil the obligation of *Tawhīd* and steer clear of any means or cause that could lead to the opposite. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّمَا جَاءَكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا يَعْصِمُ هُنَّ بَرِيشٌ عَلَيْكُمْ  
بِالْأَمْرِ مَا تَرَوْنَ فَرَحْمَةٌ﴾

There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. It grieves him to see you undergo any difficulty. He is full of concern for you, and to the believers full of compassion and mercy. (*al-Tawbah*: 128).

The Prophet (ﷺ) went to great lengths in forbidding polytheism. He cautioned and forewarned the people, reiterating this from time to time, both in specific and in generic terms. He meant to protect the religion he had been sent with, the true and simple faith, the religion of Ibrahim<sup>(1)</sup>, from any word or action that is capable of tarnishing this faith, causing it thereby to fall into decline or fade out. All this is duly evidenced in his *Sunnah* (ﷺ). Hence, he has firmly established the proof, wiped out obscurity and clearly displayed the right path, leaving no room for excuse.

The following themes will throw more light on how the Prophet (ﷺ) has actually safeguarded *Tawhīd* (monotheism) and blocked any course leading to either polytheism or falsehood.

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1- Islam, at times, is called '*Millat Ibrāhīm*' (The religion or faith of Ibrāhīm), in reference to Prophet Ibrāhīm (ﷺ), the great grandfather of our Prophet, Muhammad (ﷺ), who was himself a Muslim. (Translator)

### 2.3.1 Al-Ruqā

#### a) Meaning

*Ruqā* in the Arabic language is the plural form of '*ruqyah*', which means a therapeutic treatment involving both recitation and spitting. This recitation may be from the Glorious Qur'ān or of the Prophet's supplications.

#### b) Rule

*Ruqyah*, in Islam, is a permissible act. The proofs of this include a narration by 'Awf bin Malik (رضي الله عنه) who said, "During the *Jahiliyyah* (Pre-Islamic) period we used to apply *Ruqyah*. We therefore asked the Prophet (ﷺ) of his view concerning this practice and he said,

(اعرضوا عليّ رقاكم، لا يأس بالرقى ما لم يكن فيه شرك).

'May I see the type of *Ruqā* you use [first before I give my verdict], for there is nothing wrong in using spells as long as they are free from [elements or traces] of polytheism'." (*Muslim*: 2200).

Another narration by Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) has it that,

(رَأَخْصَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الرُّقْيَةِ مِنَ الْعَيْنِ، وَالْحَمْدَ، وَالنَّمَلَةِ).

"The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) sanctioned the use of *ruqyah* to rescue a victim of an evil eye, and of a bite, as well as *namlah*<sup>(1)</sup>". (*Muslim*: 2196).

In another *hadīth* narrated by Jābir bin 'Abdullah (رضي الله عنهما) the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

[1- *Namlah* is a sore usually found on one or both sides of a person.

(مَنْ أَسْتَطَعَ أَنْ يَنْفُعْ أَهْلَهُ فَلْيَفْعُلْ).

"Whoever is able to do his brother a favour, let him do so".  
(Muslim: 2199).

'Āishah (رضي الله عنها) has also narrated saying, "Each time any of us complained [of an illness], Allāh's Messenger would wipe his body with his right hand and then say,

(أَذِّهِبْ إِلَيْكُمْ رَبُّ الْإِنْسَانِ وَاشْفَأْهُ لَا شَفَاؤُكُمْ إِلَّا شَفَاؤِنَا لَا يَغْدِرْ سَقْمًاْ).  
'O Lord of mankind! Remove this pain and heal (the victim). You are the Healer. There is no [real] healing save Yours; such a healing that leaves behind no sickness'." (Bukhari: 5743; Muslim: 2191).

### c) Conditions.

There are three conditions for the use of '*ruqyah*' in Islam, they are:

1- A '*ruqyah*' must not be seen as self-efficacious; otherwise, using it would become a forbidden act, and even an act of *Shirk*. The user must, therefore, see it as an ordinary measure whose efficacy depends solely on Almighty Allāh's sanction.

2- It must be free from anything inconsistent with the rules of Islam. Thus, a *ruqyah* that involves calling upon any other being besides Allāh, or seeking the help of *jinn*, etc. is not only prohibited, but also amounts to polytheistic act.

3- The *ruqyah* must be made up of unambiguous and known words; hence, any *ruqyah* consisting of talismans or magical words is forbidden.

Imam Mālik (رحمه الله) was once asked the following question: "Can a man apply *'ruqyah'* or have it applied on him"? He answered: "Doing so is not unlawful, provided the *ruqyah* is of good words".

#### d) Unlawful *Ruqyah*

Any *ruqyah* that lacks the above-mentioned conditions is unlawful. Such as when the user or the person for whom the *ruqyah* is being used believes in its self-efficacy, or the *ruqyah* itself consists of polytheistic or '*bid'ah*'<sup>(1)</sup> expressions; or involves taking something as an intermediary in a manner that could lead to *kufr* (disbelief). Furthermore, a *ruqyah* that is formed of ambiguous words also belongs to this category.

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I- Any newly invented word or deed believed to be an act of worship without a proof backing it from either the Glorious Qur'ān or the *Sunnah* is condemned as a *bid'ah* (unlawful innovation or heresy), from an Islamic point of view. (Translator)

### 2.3.2 Amulets (*Al-Tamāim*)

- a) **Definition:** *Tamāim*, being the plural form of "*tamīmah*", are charms, bones, etc. usually worn or carried with a belief that they will bring one good luck or protect him from evil. Arabs in the pre-Islamic era used to put such things on their children, and allege falsely that they could protect them from evil eyes.
- b) **Rule:** Using amulets is prohibited, and not only that, it even constitutes an act of '*Shirk*', as it amounts to a sort of spiritual attachment to a created being. None but Allāh, alone, repels unwanted damages, and such must be sought only through Him, His names and His attributes.

According to Ibn Mas'ūd (رض), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(نَّ الرُّقْبَىٰ وَالْمَعَامِمُ وَالْمُغَرَّلَةُ شَرٌّ).

"**Spells, amulets and *tiwalah*<sup>(1)</sup> are all acts of '*Shirk*'!**" (*Sunan Abū Dāwūd*: 3883; *al-Mustadrak* by al-Hākim vol. iv p. 241<sup>(2)</sup>).

Another Companion, 'Abdullah bin 'Ukaim (رض) also quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(مَنْ تَعْلَمَ شَيْئًا وَكُلَّ [إِلَهٍ]).

"**Whoever wears something [believed to have magical powers] will be left forsaken in its custody**". (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. iv p. 310; *Sunan Tirmidhi*: 2072; *al-Mustadrak* vol. iv p. 241<sup>(3)</sup>).

'Uqbah bin 'Āmir similarly reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

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1- *Tiwalah* is a charm used in order to endear a wife to her husband and vice-versa.  
(Translator)

2- This is a *sahīh hadīth*, according to both al-Hākim and al-Dhahabi.

3- A *sahīh hadīth*, according to Hākim.

(من تعلقَ بقيمة فلا أتمَ الله له؛ ومن تعلقَ بذلة فلا ودعا الله له).

"Whoever wears an amulet, may Allāh grant not his/her wish, and whoever hangs a *wada'ah*<sup>(1)</sup> may he/she not be relieved". (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. iv p. 154; *Mustadrak al-Hākim* vol. iv p. 240<sup>(2)</sup>).

Also on the authority of 'Uqbah bin 'Āmir (رضي الله عنه), Imam Ahmad reported the saying of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) that,

(من علقَ بقيمة فقد أشرك).

"Whoever wears an amulet has committed *Shirk*". (*Musnad* vol. iv p. 156<sup>(3)</sup>).

The above stated proofs and other similar ones warn against polytheistic incantations, a predominant feature of the *ruqā* used then by the Arabs. Elements of *Shirk* and spiritual attachment to a created being, found in those incantations, were responsible for their proscription.

c) Muslim scholars have different opinions on whether an amulet consisting of a portion of the Glorious Qur'ān may be used or not. Some of them are in favour of wearing amulets of this sort, while others disapprove of it. The latter view is, however, the correct one based on the following reasons:

- 1- *Wada'ah* is an object hung somewhere with a believe that it has some magical powers. (Translator)
- 2- This is a *sahīh* (sound or authentic) *hadīth* according to both Hākim and Dhahabi.
- 3- A *sahīh hadīth*, according to Hākim in *al-Mustadrak* vol. iv p. 244. Furthermore, in the opinion of 'Abdul Raḥmān bin Ḥasan, its narrators are *thiqāt* (trustworthy).

- 1- The prohibition of using amulets in Islamic texts is a general rule, excluding no form of it.
- 2- The principle of *Saddu al-Dharī'ah* (Precautionary measures) in Islam also supports this view, as allowing such an amulet to be used may pave the way for using other amulets containing no portion of the Qur'ān.
- 3- Wearing an amulet of this kind will no doubt, expose the Glorious Book to dishonour, as one would have to wear it even in lavatories and the like.
- 4- Using the Glorious Qur'ān as a therapeutic measure has a clearly defined method, and that is to recite part of it on a sick person; hence, no additional method should be invented.

### 2.3.3 Wearing any ring-like object (*halaqah*), string or any other similar object believed to have magical or therapeutic effect

a) Arabs before Islam used to wear or hang these objects, and believed they have magical powers to bring them some benefit, ward off dangers, or protect them from evil eyes. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿فَلَمَّا فَرَأُوا يَتَمْرِدُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ إِنْ أَرَادُوكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِصَرٍ هُنَّ هُنَّ مُكَذِّبُوْنَ حَمْرَةً أَوْ أَرَادُوكُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ هُنَّ هُنَّ مُنْسِكُوْنَ رَجْحِيْهِ قُلْ حَمْرَةً اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُوْنَ﴾.

Say, "Then, have you considered what you invoke besides Allāh? If Allāh intended for me any harm, are they removers of His harm; or if He intended for me some mercy, are they withholders of His Mercy"? Say, "Sufficient for me is Allāh, upon Him [alone] rely the [wise] reliers". (al-Zumar: 38).

﴿فَلَمَّا آتَيْنَا الَّذِينَ زَعَمُوا مِنْ دُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ كُلَّ كُوْنٍ كَنْفَ الصَّرِّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا تَحْوِيلَ لَكُمْ﴾

Say, "Call upon those you have claimed [to be gods] besides Him. They have neither the ability to rid you of adversity nor to transfer it [to someone else]". (Al-Isrā': 56).

According to a narration by ‘Imrān bin al-Huṣain (رضي الله عنه)، the Prophet (ﷺ), having cast his eyes on a man with a brass ring on his finger, asked him, "What is this [for]"? The man answered, 'I have worn it because of *wāhīnah*<sup>(1)</sup>'. Then, the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

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1- *Al-Wāhīnah*, according to Ibn al-Athīr (*al-Nihāyah* vol. v p. 203), is an illness that usually affects the upper arm, shoulder, or the whole hand of a person. (Translator)

(اتر عهها، فائئها لا تزدبك إلا رهنا، انبذها عنك، فائقك لو مت وهي عليك ما افلحت  
أبداً).

"Take it off, for it will only increase your weakness! Throw it away, for if you were to die while it remained on you, you would never prosper"<sup>(1)</sup> n. (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. iv p. 445<sup>(2)</sup>).

In a related incident, Hudhaifah bin al-Yamān (رضي الله عنه) saw a man who had a piece of string on his hand for protection against fever. Hudhaifah reacted by cutting the string, and recited the following Qur'ānic verse:

﴿ وَمَا يَوْمٌ أَكْثَرُهُم بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُم مُشْرِكُونَ ﴾

And most of them believe not in Allāh except that they [still] associate partners with Him. (Yūsuf: 106).

### b) Rule:

The mere use of a ring or string and the like with a belief that they possess magical powers is a forbidden act (*harām*), which may even transform to an act of *Shirk*, should the user believe in their self-efficacy without Allāh's intervention. Such an act amounts to a major infringement of *Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah* (Believing in the Oneness of Lordship), as it indicates a belief in the existence of a rival to Allāh (عز وجل) in His creation and administration of the universe. Exalted is He above all what they claim for Him as associates.

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1- i.e. you will not be safe from Allāh's wrath and punishment. (Translator)

2- The *Iṣnād* (chain of transmission) of this *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan*, said al-Būṣairī. And according to al-Haithamī, the narrators are reliable.

On the other hand, if the user, having believed in the unity of Allāh and His control of all affairs, takes his wearing a ring or string as an ordinary non self-efficacious means, then his act qualifies still as a minor *shirk* on the grounds of adopting an unlawful means, and heeding to that with his heart. Furthermore, this could lead him into committing major *shirk*, especially if he becomes psychologically attached to the use of a ring or string, and thinks they could bring him a benefit or save him from calamity.

### 2.3.4 Seeking the blessings (*Al-Tabarruk*) of trees, stones, etc.

*Al-Tabarruk*, or seeking the blessings of something usually takes one of the two following courses:

- 1- *Al-Tabarruk* with a known Islamic source of blessing, like the Glorious Book of Allāh. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ مُّبَارَكٌ۝﴾

**And this [the Qur'ān] is a blessed Book, which We have revealed.** (al-An'ām: 92, 155). The blessings of the Glorious Qur'ān include the guidance it has for the human hearts, the remedy to the diseases of their breasts, as well as its reformation of their souls, and setting their characters right, etc.

- 2- *Al-Tabarruk* with an unlawful means. This includes seeking the blessing of trees, stones, graves, domes, shrines etc., and it is an act of *Shirk*.

A narration by Abu Wāqid al-Laithi (رضي الله عنه) goes thus: "We set out to *Humain* [on a military campaign] with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) by the time we had just left disbelief [and embraced Islam]. The then polytheists had a lotus tree called '*Dhāt anwāt*', which they would stick to and hang their arms on. As we were passing by a lotus tree, we asked Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), "Would you give us a '*dhāt anwāt*' similar to that of the disbelievers"? The Prophet (ﷺ) proclaimed,

(أَللّٰهُ أَكْبَرُ، إِنَّهَا السَّنَنُ، فَلَمَّا رَأَى الَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيدهِ كَمَا قَالَتْ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلُ لِمُوسَى: ﴿أَجْعَلْ لَّنَا كَمَا طِئْنَاهُ﴾، إِنَّهُمْ بِاللّٰهِ هُنَّ أَكْثَرٌ فَاللّٰهُ أَكْبَرُ، إِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَجْهَهُونَ ﴾﴾ (الأعراف: ١٢٨)، لَمَّا كَانَ سِنَنٌ مِّنْ كُلِّ كِلْمَةٍ.

"Allāhu Akbar!, This indeed, is the way [people are destined to behave]. By He (Allāh) in whose Hand is my soul, you have said this, just as the Children of Israel had said to Mūsa before:

**Make for us a god just as they have gods.** He [Mūsa] said, "Indeed, you are a people behaving ignorantly". (*al-A'raf*: 138).

**Definitely, you would follow the paths of those before you.** (*Tirmidhi*: 2180<sup>(1)</sup>).

It is obvious from this *hadīth* that the practices of those who idolise trees, graves, stones and the like, either by seeking their blessings, being devoted to them, or offering animal sacrifices to them, are all acts of *Shirk*. On this basis, their request was described in the *hadīth* as a replica of another request made in the past by the Children of Israel who had said to their Prophet, "Make for us a god just as they have gods". These people demanded to have a lotus tree and seek blessings thereof in the same manner as the polytheists usually do, while the Children of Israel asked for a god just as others also had their own gods. Both requests are in conflict with the notion of *Tawhīd* (monotheism); seeking the blessings of a tree is a form of *Shirk*, while choosing another god besides Allāh is crystal-clear *Shirk*.

The Prophet's saying, "**Definitely, you would follow the paths of those before you**", as quoted above, is an indication that something of that nature will happen in his nation, and he has said that to forbid such an act and forewarn against it.

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1- A *sahīh* *hadīth*, according to the narrator (*Tirmidhi*) himself.

### 2.3.5 Some forbidden acts concerning the graves

In a move to safeguard and preserve the faith at the advent of Islam, Muslims, who, not long ago were living in sheer ignorance, were barred from visiting the graves. Later, such a visit was declared permissible, even though with clearly defined goals. This development came in recognition of the fact that the Muslims, by then, had become stronger in their belief, just as the Islamic faith itself has gained momentous ground among the people. Moreover, the evidence of *Tawhīd* has become apparent, while on the other hand, weaknesses of counter fallacious argument have also been uncovered.

Buraidah bin al-Huṣaib (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسلم) said,

(فهياكم عن زيارۃ القبور، فزوروها).

"I used to forbid you to visit the graves, but you may now visit them". (*Muslim*: 977).

He also said, in another *hadīth* reported by Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه)،  
(زوروا القبور فإنها تذكر الموت).

"Visit the graves, for that would remind you of death". (*Muslim*: 975).

Abu Sa'īd al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) also narrated that Allāh's Messenger (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسلم) said,

(أني هبّتكم عن زيارۃ القبور فزوروها، فإنَّ فيها عبرة).

"I have in the past, forbidden you to visit the graves. But now you should visit them, for there is a lesson for you in doing so". (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. iii, p. 38; *Mustadrak al-Hākim* vol. I p. 531).

In another *hadīth* narrated by Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه), Allāh's Messenger (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسلم) also said,

(كُتِّبَ لِيَتَكُمْ عَنْ زِيَارَةِ الْقُبُورِ إِلَّا فَرُوزُوهَا؛ فَإِنَّهَا تُرْقِ القَلْبَ وَتَدْمِعُ الْعَيْنَ وَتَذَكِّرُ الْآخِرَةَ،  
وَلَا تَقُولُوا هُجُورًا).

"I have in the past forbidden you to visit the graves. O! You should now visit them, as such a visit would soften your hearts, cause you to shed tears, and remind you of the hereafter. Nevertheless, you should never say '*hujr'* (any forbidden word)". (*Mustadrak al-Hākim* vol. 1 p. 532).

Buraïdah (رض) again reported that, "Allāh's Messenger used to teach his companions [what to say] whenever they visited a cemetery. One of them would say,

(السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَإِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ يَكُمْ لَا حَفْرُونَ، أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ  
لَكُمُ الْعَافِيَةَ).

"Peace be upon you the inhabitants of this land, from among the believers and the Muslims. With the will of Allāh, we shall surely join you. I beseech Allāh to give us and you too peace, forgiveness, wellbeing, etc". (*Muslim*: 975).

It is evident from the above-mentioned *hadīths* and others, that visiting the graves, after it had been prohibited, was later declared permissible for two major purposes. The first is to teach the people voluntary renunciation of worldly attractions through their remembrance of the life to come, death and human decomposition, in addition to learning from what befalls the deceased in their graves. All this would not only help increase one in faith and strengthen his conviction, but would also broaden his spiritual contact with Allāh and rid him of inadvertence and turning away from the truth.

The second objective for authorising such visits is to show kindness to the dead, through the supplication a visitor would make to Allāh to have mercy on them and forgive their sins.

What we have just mentioned in this regard is the only view supported by proofs. Thus, it is binding on whoever claims to have an opposing view to provide convincing and cogent evidence on his claim.

Moreover, for the purpose of preserving the tenets of *Tawhīd*, the *Sunnah* has spoken of many prohibitions in relation to either the graves or the visit to them. Every Muslim ought to learn about this, to save himself from falsehood and religious aberration. We shall now talk on some of those prohibited acts as follows:

#### i) Saying '*Hujr*' during the visits to graveyards

It has been mentioned above that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) cautioned against saying '*hujr*' during any visit to graveyards. '*Hujr*' is an Arabic word standing for whatever is unlawful in Islam, the worst of which is to associate a partner with Allāh, by calling on the dead instead of Allāh, for help or good health. This is an open act of *Shirk* and a plain disbelief. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) has also declared in clear terms in many *hadiths* of his that such acts are unlawful, and cursed whoever engages in any of them.

Imam Muslim, the renowned scholar of *Hadīth*, reported on the authority of Jundub bin ‘Abdullah (رض), that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said just five days before his death,

(أَلَا إِنَّ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ كَانُوا يَتَعَذَّرُونَ قُبُورَ أَنْبِيَاءِهِمْ وَصَالِحِيهِمْ مَسَاجِدَهُمْ إِلَّا فَلَا تَتَخَذُوا  
الْقُبُورَ مَسَاجِدَ إِلَيْ أَهْلِكُمْ عَنْ ذَلِكَ).  
The Prophets and the righteous among them as places of worship. You should not use the graves as places of worship (i.e. mosques), I am indeed forbidding that for you". (*Muslim*: 532).

"Indeed, those who came before you used to take the graves of their Prophets and the righteous among them as places of worship. You should not use the graves as places of worship (i.e. mosques), I am indeed forbidding that for you". (*Muslim*: 532).

It is, thus, major *Shirk* to call on a dead person for help or offer an act of worship to him. It is also an atrocious innovation to either devote oneself to the graves, or pursue therein answer to one's supplication, as well as to perform prayer (*salāh*) in a mosque that has graves within it.

'Aishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said during his last illness,

(لَعْنَ اللَّهِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَتَخَذُو رُقُوبَ أَنْبِيَاءِهِمْ مَسَاجِدَهُمْ).

"May Allāh curse the Jews and the Christians, for they have used the graves of their Prophets as places of worship". (*Bukhārī*: 1330; *Muslim*: 531).

## ii) Slaughtering at a cemetery

This is counted as an act of major *Shirk*, provided that the intention is to please the dead, with the hope that they may come to one's aid. Doing so for any other purpose apart from what has been mentioned also amounts to a very risky innovation that could lead to *Shirk*. The Prophet (ﷺ) has said, "*Aqr* is not Islamic". In his explanation of '*Aqr*' mentioned in the *hadīth*, a sub-narrator, 'Abd al-Razzāq [al-Šan'āni] said, "They used to slaughter cows or sheep at graveyards". (*Sunan Abu Dawūd*: 3222).

iii- vii) Raising the surface of a grave by adding more to the originally extracted soil; plastering the grave; inscribing names etc. on it; constructing a building on it; and sitting on it.

All of the aforementioned are part of the innovations that led the Jews and the Christians astray, and were major causes of *Shirk*. Jâbir (رضي الله عنه) reported saying,

(هُنَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدٌ أَنْ يَحْصُصُ الْقَبْرَ، وَأَنْ يَقْعُدْ عَلَيْهِ، وَأَنْ يُنْوِي عَلَيْهِ، وَأَنْ يَرْوَى عَلَيْهِ، أَوْ يَكْتُبْ عَلَيْهِ).<sup>1</sup>

"Allâh's Messenger (ﷺ) forbade the plastering of the graves, sitting on them, erecting buildings on them, adding another soil to their soil, and inscribing anything on them". (*Muslim*: 970 ; *Sunan Abu Dawûd*: 3225 and 3226; *Mustadrak al-Hâkim* vol. i p. 525).

viii) Praying in the direction of graves, or performing the prayers in graveyards

According to Abu Murthid al-Ghanawi (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(لَا تَصْلُوْا إِلَى الْقَبْرِ، وَلَا تَجْلِسُوا عَلَيْهِ).

"Do not pray in the direction of graves, and do not sit on them". (*Muslim*: 972).

Another *hadîth* of the Prophet (ﷺ), reported on the authority of Abu Sa'îd al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه), goes thus:

(الْأَرْضُ كُلُّهَا مَسْجِدٌ، إِلَّا الْمَغْرِبُ وَالْحَمَامُ).

"The earth as a whole is suitable to be used as a mosque, except for cemeteries and lavatories". (*Sunan Abu Dawûd*: 492, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*: 317<sup>(1)</sup>).

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1- A *sahîh* (sound or authentic) *hadîth*, according to both al-Hâkim and al-Dhahabi.

### ix) Building mosques on the graves

This also is an innovation inherited from the Jews and Christians' aberrations. The *hadīth* in relation to this narrated by 'Aishah (عَمِّي أُبَيْ بْنِ كَلْمَانْ) has been mentioned above, i.e. "**May Allāh curse the Jews and the Christians, for they have used the graves of their Prophets as places of worship**".

### x) Frequent visits to graves or transforming such into a festivity

This is another innovation against which there is downright prohibition, considering the gravity of its damage. Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(لَا تَتَحَدَّرُوا قَبْرِي عِيداً، وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا بيوتَكُمْ قبوراً، وَحِينما كُنْتُمْ فَصَلُّوا عَلَيَّ، فَإِنَّ صَلَاتَكُمْ تَبْلُغُنِي).

"Do not use my grave as a festival<sup>(1)</sup>, and do not cause your houses to become graves. Ask for the blessings of Allāh to be upon me wherever you may be, for that will surely reach me". (*Sunan Abu Dāwūd*: 2042; *Musnād Ahmad* vol. ii, p. 367).

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1- *Id* or festival is something that reoccurs repeatedly, such as the Feast of Breaking the Ramadan Fast (*Id al-fitr*), or the Major Feast (*Id al-adhā*). Paying frequent visits to the Prophet's grave on a daily basis with the aim of greeting him is more or less a way of transforming the scene into a festival. The Prophet (ﷺ) has, therefore, forbidden this and ordered that Muslims should offer their invocation for Allāh's Mercy and Blessings to be on him wherever they are. He also added that some angels have been charged by Allāh with the duty of conveying such salutations to him. This itself is another manifestation of the simplicity of this religion, as it is not feasible for every Muslim to be physically present in the city of the Prophet (ﷺ).

**xi) To set out on a journey purposely to visit a grave.**

This also is a forbidden act, being a channel of *shirk*. It occurs in a narration by Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(لَا تُشَدُّ الْرُّحْلَةُ إِلَّا إِلَى نَلَّةٍ مَسَاجِدٍ: الْمَسْجِدُ الْأَكْرَامُ، وَمَسْجِدُ الرَّسُولِ ﷺ، وَمَسْجِدُ الْأَقْصَى).

"No one should start out on a journey to visit a particular place save three mosques. The Sacred Mosque in Makkah, the mosque of Allāh's Messenger and the *Aqṣā* (Jerusalem) mosque". (*Bukhari*: 1189; *Muslim*: 1397).

### 2.3.6 Al-Tawassul

#### a) Definition:

Linguistically, The word "*Tawassul*" is derived from another Arabic word "*wasīlat*", that is, means, measure, medium, etc. "*Al-wasīlat*" (الوسيلة) and "*al-wasīlat*" (الوصلة) have almost the same meaning; hence, "*al-Tawassul*" denotes seeking to attain one's aim and the effort made for its achievement.

*Al-Tawassul*, in a less broad Islamic definition, is seeking the attainment of Allāh's pleasure and His Paradise, by doing what He has ordained and abstaining from what He has forbidden.

#### b) "*Al-Wasīlat*" in the Qur'ānic context:

This word occurred twice in the whole of the Glorious Qur'ān. The first place is where Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَاجْهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَفْلِحُونَ ﴾

O you who believe! Fear Allāh and seek the means [of approach] to Him. And strive in His cause, that you may succeed. (al-Mā'idah: 35).

In the other place, Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ أَوْلَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ أَفَرَبُهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ حَذِيرًا ﴾

Those whom they call upon seek [themselves] the means [of approach] to their Lord, as to which of them would be nearest, and they hope for His Mercy and fear His punishment. Indeed, the punishment of your Lord is ever feared. (al-Isrā': 57).

The meaning of *al-wasīlat* in both verses is seeking nearness to Allāh by doing what He would assent to. Thus, we see al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr in his commentary on the first verse narrating from Ibn ‘Abbās (ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما) and others like Mujahid, Abu Wāil, al-Hasan al-Baṣri, ‘Abdullah bin Kathīr, al-Suddi and Ibn Zayd, who have all explained the word *al-wasīlat* in the verse to mean an attempt to get closer to Allāh (هذا).<sup>(1)</sup>

As for the second verse, as quoted above, a great Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ), ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه) has made known the circumstances surrounding its revelation, as well as its meaning. He said, "The verse was revealed in connection with the case of a group of Arabs who had been worshipping a group of *jinn*. Later, those *jinn* themselves embraced Islam, while their worshippers remained unaware". (*Bukhāri*: 4714; *Muslim*: 3030).

This is clear enough to establish that '*wasīlat*' is any righteous deed or lofty act of worship adopted as means of seeking Almighty Allāh's favour. And for this reason Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿يَتَفَاعَلُونَ إِلَّا رَبِّهِمُ الْوَاحِدُ﴾

"They seek the means of approach to their Lord". That is, they look for those pious acts that can be used as means to get nearer to Allāh, and, of course, to gain His pleasure.

c) **Divisions of *Tawassul*:** *Tawassul* has two types; lawful and unlawful.

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I- Ibn Kathīr, *al-Tafsīr*, vol. ii p. 50.

i) The lawful *Tawassul* is to use a legitimate means to get closer to Allāh, and the proper way for knowing such is to consult the Glorious Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ). Whatever means declared as lawful in both or any of them is thereby valid, while all other methods of approach should accordingly be seen as invalid.

This lawful *Tawassul* is itself subdivided into three types, namely:

1- Using any of Allāh's most beautiful names and attributes as a means of approach to Him. An example of this is when a Muslim says in his supplication, 'O Allāh, I ask You with Your being the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, to make me healthy'. Or he says, 'I beseech You with Your mercy that encompasses all things, to forgive me and have mercy on me', etc.

The proof of the validity of this type comes in the body of the following Qur'anic text:

﴿ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِالْأَنْعَمِ لَكُمْ فَادْعُوهُ بِمَا شَاءُتُمْ ﴾

"To Allāh belong the Most Beautiful Names: invoke Him by them". (al-Atāf: 180).

2- Using the righteous deeds one has performed, as means of approach to Allāh. For instance, one may say, 'O Allāh, forgive me by virtue of my belief in You, my love for You and my following Your Messenger'. Or say, 'O Allāh, I beseech You to drive away my grief, in consideration of the love I have for your Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), and my belief in his message'. The supplicant may also mention a considerable good deed he/she has performed, and use that to seek access to his Lord, as done by the three men of the cave, whose story we shall mention, later.

The proofs of the validity of this type include Allāh's (ﷻ) saying,

﴿الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّا مَأْمُوكَ فَاغْفِرْنَا دُنُوبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ﴾

**Those who say, "Our Lord! We have indeed believed, so forgive us our sins and save us from the punishment of the Fire".** (Al-'Imrān: 16).

﴿رَبَّنَا إِنَّا مَأْمُوكَ فَاغْفِرْنَا دُنُوبَنَا فَاصْنَعْنَا مَعَ الشَّهِيدِينَ﴾

**Our Lord! We believe in what You have revealed and follow Your Messenger, so list us among those who bear witness [to the truth].** (Al-'Imrān: 53).

The content of the story of the three men of the cave is another proof supporting the validity of this form of *Tawassul*. According to 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(يَسِّرْ لِلَّهِ نَفْرِ مِنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ يَعْشُونَ إِذَا أَصَابُوهُمْ مَطْرٌ، فَأَوْرُوا إِلَى غَارٍ فَانْطَبَقَ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ: إِنَّهُ وَاللهِ يَا هُزَلَاءِ لَا يَسْعِكُمْ إِلَّا الصَّدْقٌ، فَلَمَّا دَعَ كُلُّ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ بِمَا عَلِمَ اللَّهُ قَدْ صَدَقَ فِيهِ، فَقَالَ وَاحِدٌ مِنْهُمْ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ كَانَ لِي أَجْيَرٌ عَمَلٌ فِي عَلَى فَرَقٍ مِنْ أَرْزَاقِهِ وَتَرَكَهُ، وَأَنِّي عَمِدَتْ إِلَى ذَلِكَ الْفَرَقَ فَزَرَعْتُهُ، فَصَارَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ الَّتِي اشْتَرَتْ مِنْهُ بَقْرًا، وَإِنَّهُ أَتَانِي يَطْلَبُ أَجْرَهُ، فَقَلَّتْ لَهُ: أَعْمَدَ إِلَى تَلْكَ الْبَقَرِ فَسَقَاهُ، فَقَالَ لِي: إِنَّمَا يَعْدُكَ فَرَقٌ مِنْ أَرْزَاقِكَ، فَقَلَّتْ لَهُ: أَعْمَدَ إِلَى تَلْكَ الْبَقَرِ، فَلَأَنَّهَا مِنْ الْفَرَقِ، فَسَاقَهَا، فَإِنَّ كَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنِّي فَعَلْتُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ خَشْيَتِكَ فَغَرَّجْ عَنِّي، فَانسَاحَتْ عَنْهُمُ الصَّحْرَاءُ، فَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ كَانَ لِي أَبُوَانِ شِيْخَانِ كَبِيرَانِ، وَكَنْتُ آتَيْهُمَا كُلَّ لَيْلَةَ بَلْنَ غَنْمٍ لِي، فَأَبْطَأْتُ عَلَيْهِمَا لَيْلَةً، فَجَحَّتْ وَقَدْ رَقَداً، وَأَهْلِي وَعِيَانِي يَضْنَاغُونَ مِنَ الْجَرْوعِ، فَكَنْتُ لَا أَسْقِيْهِمْ حَتَّى يَشْرَبُوْنِي، فَكَرْهَتْ أَنْ أَوْقِظَهُمَا، وَكَرْهَتْ أَنْ أَدْعُهُمَا فِي سَعْكَنَا لِشَرِّهِمَا، فَلَمْ أَزِلْ انتَظَرْ حَتَّى طَلَعَ الْفَجْرُ، فَإِنْ كَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنِّي فَعَلْتُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ خَشْيَتِكَ فَغَرَّجْ عَنِّي، فَانسَاحَتْ عَنْهُمُ الصَّحْرَاءُ حَتَّى نَظَرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ، فَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ كَانَ لِي أَبْنَةُ عَمْ مِنْ أَحَبِّ النَّاسِ إِلَيْيَ، وَإِنِّي رَأَدَّهُمَا عَنْ نَفْسَهُمَا فَأَبْتَ إِلَّا أَنْ آتَيْهَا بِعَائِدَةٍ

دينار، فطلبَتْها حتى قدرتْ، فائيَّتها ها فدفعَتْها إليها فامكنتَي من نفسها، فلما قعدتْ بين رجلِيها قالَتْ: إلَّيْهِ لا يُغْفَرُ الخَائِمُ الْأَبْحَقُ، فلَمَّا وَرَكِّتَ الْمَالَةَ دِينَارَ، فَإِنْ كَتَ تَعْلَمْ أَلَيْ فَعَلْتَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ خَشْبِكَ فَفَرَّجَ عَنَّا، فَفَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ فَخَرَجُوا).

"Once, three men of the previous nations were walking, and it suddenly started to rain. They took shelter in a cave, the entrance of which got closed as they were inside. They said to each other, 'O you people, by Allāh! Nothing can rescue you from this but the truth, so let each one of you invoke [Allāh] by referring to such a deed which he knows he has done sincerely [for Him]'. One of them said, O Allāh! You know that I had a labourer who worked for me on the condition that I should give him a *faraq*<sup>(1)</sup> of rice. The labourer left and abandoned his wages, but I sowed the *faraq* of rice and with its yield I bought some cows. Later on, he came to me demanding his wages and I said to him: "Go to those cows and drive them away with you". He said, But I am only entitled to a *faraq* of rice. Then I asked him to take the cows, for they are all products of that *faraq*, and he drove them away [with him]. O Allāh! If what I have done is seen by You to be out of my fear of You, may You then open this cave for us. The rock [at the entrance of the cave] shifted a bit<sup>(2)</sup>. The other man then said, "O Allāh! You are aware that I had old parents whom I used to provide with the milk of my sheep every night. One night I had a

1- A *Faraq* = 6516 grams. Qal'aji, Muhammad Rawwās, *Mu'jam Lughat al-Fiqahā'* (Dictionary of Islamic Legal Terms) pp. 312, 419. (Translator)

2- But the space was so small that they could not have come out through it. This clarification is found in a separate narration by Sālim.

delay, and came later but found them sleeping. My wife and children were already crying in hunger, but I used to delay their drinking from the milk until my parents had drunk first. I did not want to wake them up, but also disliked leaving them alone without drinking from the milk, otherwise, they might become weak. I kept waiting [for them] until daybreak. O Allāh! If what I have done is considered by You to be out of my fear of You, may You then open this cave for us. The rock once again shifted and they could then see the sky. The third man said, O Allāh, You know that I had a cousin (a daughter of my paternal uncle) whom I loved very much. I tried to seduce her but she refused to comply unless I paid her one hundred dinars. I sought the money and got it, and having brought the dinars to her she allowed me to sleep with her. As I was sitting between her legs (i.e. so close as to making love to her) she said, "Fear Allāh, and beware of opening the seal without the right to do so<sup>(1)</sup>". [On hearing this] I got up and left [for her] the hundred dinars. O Allāh! If what I have done is seen by You to be out of my fear of You, may You then open this cave for us. Thus, Allāh made the cave open, and they came out of it". (*Bukhari*: 3465).

3- Using a supplication made by a pious man or woman, whose supplication is expected to be answered, as a means of approach to

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I- i.e. do not deflower me, for you have no legitimate right to do so; you are not my husband. (Translator)

Allāh. A Muslim may, for instance, request from such a righteous individual, known to be persistently obedient to Allāh (ﷻ), to supplicate Allāh on his behalf, for relief from certain distress or for comfort and well-being.

The fact that the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) used to ask him, whether privately or collectively, to supplicate Allāh on their behalf is a sufficient proof of the validity of this type of *Tawassul*. A narration by Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) goes thus:

(أَنَّ رَجُلًا دَخَلَ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ مِنْ بَابِ كَانَ وَجَاهَ النِّيرَ وَرَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَائِمًا يُخْطَبُ، فَاسْتَقْبَلَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَائِمًا فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَلْكَتِ الْمَوَاشِي وَانْقَطَعَتِ السُّبُلُ، فَادْعُ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ بِأَنِّي، قَالَ: فَرُوحَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ يَدِيهِ فَقَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ اسْقُنَا، اللَّهُمَّ اسْقُنَا، قَالَ أَنَسٌ: وَلَا وَاللَّهِ مَا تَرَى فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ مِنْ سَحَابَ وَلَا فَرْعَةَ وَلَا شَيْئًا، وَمَا يَبْثَثُ وَمَا يَنْسَعُ مِنْ بَيْتٍ وَلَا دَارٍ، قَالَ: فَطَلَعَتِ الْمُطَرَّتُ مِنْ وَرَاءِهِ سَحَابَةً مِثْلَ التَّرَسِ؛ فَلَمَّا تَوَسَّطَ السَّمَاوَاتِ اتَّشَرَتْ، ثُمَّ أَمْطَرَتْ، قَالَ: وَاللَّهِ مَا رَأَيْنَا الشَّمْسَ مُثْلًا، ثُمَّ دَخَلَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ ذَلِكَ الْبَابِ فِي الْجُمُعَةِ الْمُقْبَلَةِ – وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَائِمٌ يُخْطَبُ – فَاسْتَقْبَلَهُ قَائِمًا فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، هَلْكَتِ الْأَمْوَالُ وَانْقَطَعَتِ السُّبُلُ، فَادْعُ اللَّهَ يَمْسِكُهَا، قَالَ: فَرُوحَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ يَدِيهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ حَوَّلْنَا وَلَا عَلَيْنَا، اللَّهُمَّ عَلَى الْأَكَامِ وَالْجِبَالِ وَالظَّرَابِ وَمَنَابِتِ الشَّجَرِ، قَالَ: فَانْقَطَعَتْ، وَخَرَجَ فَخَيَّفَ فِي الشَّمْسِ).

"On a Friday, a man entered [the Prophet's mosque] through a gate facing the pulpit, while Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was standing delivering the *Khutbah* (Friday sermon). The man stood and faced the Prophet, then proclaimed: 'O Allāh's Messenger, the livestock are dying and the roads have been cut off! Invoke Allāh to bless us [with rain]'. The Prophet raised his hands and prayed, "O Allāh! Give us rain" (three times). By Allāh! There were no clouds at all in the sky that we could see, and there was no single building

between us and the mountain of *Saf'*<sup>(1)</sup>. A cloud like a shield appeared from behind the mountain, and, after reaching the middle of the sky, spread and then rained. By Allāh! We could not see the sun for a whole week. On the next Friday, a man also entered through the same gate, while the Prophet was also standing giving the sermon. The man stood facing the Prophet (ﷺ) and proclaimed, 'O Allāh's Messenger! Properties are being destroyed, and the roads are cut off. Invoke Allāh to stop the rain'. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) raised his hands and supplicated, "O Allāh! [Send] the rain round about us and not on us. [May the rain be confined to] the plateaus, the mountains, the hills, and the tree trunks". It [suddenly] ceased to rain and we came out walking in the sun". Shuraik, a sub-narrator of this *hadīth* said, 'I asked Anas whether this man was the same man who had entered the mosque the previous Friday? Anas said, "I do not know". (*Bukhāri*: 1013, *Muslim*: 897).

In another *hadīth* reported also by both *Bukhāri* and *Muslim*, the Prophet (ﷺ), having said that some seventy thousand people among his followers will be admitted into Paradise without being called to account for any of their deeds, or being subjected to any form of punishment, described them as follows:

(هُمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يسْتَرْقُونَ وَلَا يَكْحُورُونَ وَلَا يَنْطِهِرُونَ وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَعْوَذُونَ).

"They are those who neither request the use of *ruqyah* nor cauterize their body tissue for medicinal purposes, and neither do

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1- *Saf'*, up till to day, is the name of a mountain in the city of Madinah. (Translator)

they believe in bad or good omens of birds. They rely only on their Lord". 'Ukāshah bin Mihsan stood up and said, O Messenger of Allāh! Ask Allāh to let me be one of them. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "You are one of them". (*Bukhārī*: 5705; *Muslim*: 218).

In another *hadīth* of similar denotation, the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned 'Uwais al-Qarnī<sup>(1)</sup> and advised the audience to ask him to seek Allāh's forgiveness on their behalf.

This type of *Tawassul* is only applicable provided that the person we ask to supplicate for us is alive. It is forbidden to request such from a dead person who, in essence, has ceased to engage in any act.

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1- This man has been described in another *hadīth* as a righteous man who will live in the generation of the *Tābi'īn* (Those who lived immediately after the Companions and have actually met some of them). (Translator)

## ii) Forbidden *Tawassul*

That is using an invalid means, from an Islamic viewpoint, to seek access to Allāh (ﷻ). The forbidden *Tawassul* is of various types, which are also of varying degrees of unacceptability. They include:

1- *Tawassul* that involves calling on dead or unseen people for help, or to provide one's needs or dispel his worries. Doing so is an act of major *Shirk* and qualifies the perpetrator as a non-Muslim.

2- Seeking access to Allāh by worshipping at graveyards. Such as supplicating to Allāh there; building a mosque or the like on top of the graves; and placing lamps, mantles or veils around them, etc. Such acts are regarded as minor polytheism which is not only inconsistent with the perfection of *Tawhīd*, but also leads to committing the major one.

3- Using the honour, prestige or lofty position of the Prophets and the righteous men and women as a means of approach to Allāh (ﷻ). This is a forbidden, nay innovated heresy, for Allāh has never sanctioned or approved of it. He says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُنْكَرٍ﴾

**Has Allāh permitted you [to do so]? (Yūnus: 59).**

The honour or position of the righteous people in the sight of Allāh benefit only their holders. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿وَأَنَّ لَيْسَ الْإِنْسَنُ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى﴾

**And that man has only that for which he makes effort. (al-Najm: 39).** Using *Tawassul* in this way was therefore unknown during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions. Many Muslim scholars have

also unequivocally declared it forbidden. Abū Ḥanīfah<sup>(1)</sup> (ابن حنفیہ) said, "It is blameworthy for a supplicant to say, 'I ask You (Allāh) with the honour or importance of so and so person, or that of Your *Awliyā'* (beloved ones among His creatures), Your Messengers, the Sacred House, or the *Mash'ar al-Harām*<sup>(2)</sup>".

**d) Refutation of [common] fallacious arguments concerning *Tawassul***

Perhaps the antagonists of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* (The Orthodox Sunni Muslims who follow strictly the injunctions of the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*) would cite some fallacious arguments or raise certain objections regarding the issue of *Tawassul*, either to sustain their erring conclusions or to give the laymen wrong impression of the genuineness of their stance. Their argumentation in this regard is, usually, centred around one of the following points:

**First:** Weak or fabricated *hadīths*, which they use to buttress their stand on the issue. However, once the fictitious nature of such *hadīths* or their weakness is uncovered, the purported argument itself becomes baseless. Some examples of those *hadīths* are as follows:

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- 1- The famous scholar and one of the four imams of the Muslims schools of law.  
(Translator)
  - 2- *Al-Mash'ar al-Harām* is another name for *Muzdalifah*, a suburb of Makkah city.  
(Translator)

١- (توسلوا بجاهي فإنَّ جاهي عند الله عظيم)، أو (إذا سألكم الله فاسأله بجاهي فإنَّ جاهي عند الله عظيم).

1- "Use my prestige [i.e. the Prophet's] to seek access [to Allāh], for my prestige in the sight of Allāh is an esteemed one".

Or: "When you ask Allāh, ask Him with my prestige, for my prestige, in His sight, is an esteemed one".

The statement above is a fabricated *hadīth*, neither reported by any Muslim scholar, nor recorded in any of the *hadīth* compilations.

٢- (إذا أعيتكم الأمور فعليكم باهل القبور)، أو (فاستغثوا باهل القبور).

2- "Whenever you are bewildered or confounded with a matter, then you should call on the dead to help you".

This, as well, in the opinion of all Muslim scholars, is a spurious and forged statement.

٣- (لو احسن أحدكم طفله بمجرد لقعده).

3- "An ordinary stone could have been a source of benefit to one of you, if he had had a good impression of it".

This is another *hadīth* fabricated by some polytheists, and its content obviously runs contrary to the teachings of Islam.

٤- (لما اقترف آدم الخطية قال: يا ربُّ أسألك عمنْ محمدٌ لما غفرت لي، فقال: يا آدم وكيف عرفتَ مُحَمَّداً ولمْ أخلقْه؟ قال: يا ربُّ لما خلقتني بيديك وفتحتَ فيَّ من روحك رفعتَ رأسي فرأيتُ على قوانِمِ العرش مكتوبَاً: لا إله إلاَّ اللهُ مُحَمَّدُ رسولُ اللهِ، فعلمتُ أنَّك لم تتصفْ إلَّا أحبَّتِ إلَّا أخْلَقْتِ إلَّا أخْلَقْتِ إلَيْكَ، فلما غفرتَ لك ولو لِمُحَمَّدٍ ما خلقْتَك).

4- "After Ādam (ﷺ) had committed the sin, he said, "O my Lord!, With the prestige of Muḥammad, I beseech You to forgive me". Allāh said, "O Ādam! How did you know of Muḥammad when I have not yet created him"? He replied: "O my Lord! After

you have created me with Your own Hand and breathed into me the soul You have made, I raised my head and saw thereby an inscription on the poles of the Throne reading: 'There is no god worthy of worship save Allāh, and Muhammad is His Messenger'. I deduced from this that you have appended his name to Yours because of his being your most beloved creature". Allāh said, "I have forgiven you; were it not for the sake of Muhammad, I would not have created you<sup>(1)</sup>".

This also is a false and baseless *hadīth*. In another fabricated one, the content reads:

(لَوْلَا مَا خَلَقْتَ الْأَنْوَافَ).

"Had it not been for your sake [Muhammad] I would not have made the orbits".

The attitude of a Muslim towards these and other forged *hadīths* should be total negligence, and should never, in the least, see in them a proof, let alone relying on them in his religion.

**Second:** Genuine *hadīths*, which they either misunderstand or deliberately distort and misinterpret. Some of these *hadīths* are:

1- (أنَّ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابَ (صَفَرَهُ)) كَانَ إِذَا قَحَطُوا اسْتَعْفَى بِالْعَبَاسَ بْنَ عَبْدِ الْمَطَّلِبِ، فَقَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَعْوَلُ إِلَيْكَ بَهِبَّةً فَسَقَبْنَا، وَإِنَّا نَعْوَلُ إِلَيْكَ بَعْمَ نَبِيًّا فَاسْقَنَا، قَالَ: فَيَسْقُونَ.

1- "Each time they suffered drought, 'Umar bin al-Khattāb asked al-'Abbās bin 'Abd al-Muttalib [the Prophet's uncle] to

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1- Al-Albānī, Muḥammad Nāṣir al-dīn, *Silsilatu al-Āḥādīth al-Da'īyah wa al-Mawḍū'ah* (The Series of Weak and Fabricated *Hadīths*), vol.i, pp. 88, *hadīth* no. 25.

invoke Allāh for rain. He would say, "O Allāh! We used to ask our Prophet to invoke You for rain and you have always blessed us with such. Now (after the death of the Prophet) we ask his uncle to invoke You for rain on our behalf, so we beseech You to give us rain". The narrator added: "And they would be given rain". (*Bukhārī*: 1010)

Those opponents of *Ahl al-Sunnah* (The Orthodox Sunni Muslims) erroneously infer from the above *hadīth* that 'Umar actually used the prestige of 'Abbās and his position in Allāh's sight as a means of approach to Him. They therefore interpret the contents as "We have been using the prestige of our Prophet to seek access to You, and you would give us rain. We now use that of his uncle to seek access to You".

This is, clearly, a misunderstanding on their part, and a very remote interpretation, which is even incompatible with the context. Using the person or prestige of the Prophet (ﷺ) as a method of approach to Allāh was, as far as the Companions of the Prophet were concerned, an unknown phenomenon. They would instead ask him, during his lifetime, to invoke Allāh on their behalf, as we have earlier mentioned some instances of this. Thus, when 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) made his aforementioned statement "**Now (after the death of the Prophet) we ask his uncle to invoke You for rain on our behalf**", he never had in mind using 'Abbās's prestige or person, but rather his invocation on their behalf. Besides, had taking the person or prestige of anyone as a way of seeking Allāh's favour been a known phenomenon to them, it would have been meaningless on the part of 'Umar to give up using

the person or prestige of the Prophet (ﷺ) and resort to that of 'Abbās (عليه السلام). Other Companions too would have questioned the rationale for such a move. Since no objection of this kind was raised by them, and having known that they actually used the Prophet's invocation for them during his lifetime, or that of someone else after his death as a means of approach to Allāh, it is understandable that what they believed to be lawful with respect to *Tawassul* was to use the invocation of the intermediary and not his person.

The *hadīth* therefore, comprises no proof in support of the view that says a person or his prestige may be used as a means of approach to Allāh (عز وجله).

2- 'Uthmān bin Hunaif (رضي الله عنه) narrated: A blind man came to the Prophet and said, "Ask Allāh to cure me (to restore my sight)". The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

(إن شئت دعوت وإن شئت صبرت فهو خير لك).

"If that is your wish I shall do, but should you wish to endure your disability that would be better for you". The man repeated his demand for the prophet's invocation. Then, the Prophet commanded him to perform ablution in the best way he could and say the following supplication:

(اللهم إني أسألك وآتُرُجُوك بِنَبِيِّ الرَّحْمَةِ، إِنِّي تَوَجَّهُ إِلَيْكَ إِنِّي رَئِيْسٌ فِي حَاجَيَ هَذِهِ لَفْظَيِّ لِي، اللَّهُمَّ فَشَفِعْ فِي).

"O Allāh! I beseech You and turn towards You through Your Prophet, Muhammad; the Prophet of mercy. Through you I have turned towards my Lord, that my request may be granted. O

Allāh, accept his intercession for me". (*Sunan Tirmidhi*: 3578; *Musnad Ahmad* vol. iv p. 138<sup>(1)</sup>).

Those antagonists think that the above *hadīth* sanctions the use of the Prophet's prestige or that of any other righteous individual as a means of approach to Allāh, whereas the *hadīth*, in reality, is void of any indication to this. The blind man only requested that the Prophet (ﷺ) invokes Allāh to restore his sight, and thus he responded saying, "If that is your wish I shall do, but should you wish to endure your disability, that would be better for you", but the man insisted that he should invoke Allāh. The wording of this *hadīth* has, therefore, clearly proved that the story was only an instance of a *tawassul* through the Prophet's supplication, and not through his person or prestige. Based on this, Muslim scholars such as al-Baihaqi<sup>(2)</sup>, regard the contents of this *hadīth* as a manifestation of the Prophet's miracle and an example of how Allāh answerd his invocations. Allāh (ﷻ) restored the blind man's sight in recognition of the blessings of the Prophet's invocation for him.

However, after the death of the Prophet (ﷺ), receiving such a blessing the blind man enjoyed is unrealistic, for it is impossible that the Prophet would supplicate for any one after he (ﷺ) has died. A *hadīth* of his reads as follows:

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1- According to al-Baihaqī, the chain of transmission for this *hadīth* is sound.

2- See his voluminous book: *Dalā'il al-Nubūwah* (Proofs of Prophethood) vol. vi, p. 167.

(إِنَّ مَاتَ الْإِنْسَانُ إِنْقَطَعَ عَمَلُهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ: صَدَقَةً جَارِيَةً أَوْ عِلْمًا يُنْفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلْدًا صَالِحًا يَدْعُو لِهِ).

"The acts of everyman come to an end with his death, except for three. These are: recurring charity, knowledge by which the people after him benefit, and a righteous offspring who invokes Allāh for him", (*Muslim*: 1631). Supplication, understandably, is one of those good deeds that are bound to cease with the death of any human being.

In any case, the arguments put forward by the antagonists are devoid of any proof, as they are all based on either unreliable traditions, or on sound *hadīths* whose contents have nothing to do with their false claim.

### 2.3.7 Excess (*Al-Ghuluww*)

#### a) Definition:

Exceeding the proper limits in any way, either by overrating or underrating something is called '*ghuluww*' in the Arabic language.

The word *ghuluww* as an Islamic term indicates going beyond the limit set by Allāh for His servants, concerning their belief or worship.

#### b) Rule:

Excess is prohibited in Islam. This has been stated in a number of religious texts, which also warn against being excessive, and explain the immediate and remote consequences that await the fanatics. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ فِي دِينِهِمْ كُلَّا تَقُولُوا عَنِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقُّ﴾

O people of the Book, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allāh except the truth. (al-Nisā': 171).

﴿قُلْ يَا أَيُّهُ الْمُكَفِّرُونَ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا شَيْءٌ عَنِ الْحَقِّ يَعْلَمُ فَمَنْ حَسَدَ لَوْلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِمَا كُلِّيَّا وَصَنَعُوا عَنْ سَبَأَ وَالْكَرْبَلَاءِ﴾

Say, "O people of the Book, do not exceed the limits in your religion beyond the truth, and do not follow the inclinations of a people who had gone astray before and misled many, and have strayed from the right path". (al-Mâ'idah: 77).

A narration by Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) has it that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(إِنَّكُمْ وَالْغَلُو، فَأَئْمَّا هُنَّكُمْ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ بِالْغَلُو فِي الدِّينِ).

"Beware of excess, for those who preceded you were destroyed on the grounds of being extremists in [practicing their] religion". (*Musnad Ahmad*: vol. i p. 347; *al-Mustadrak* vol. i p. 638<sup>(1)</sup>).

In another *hadīth* reported by Ibn Mas'ūd (رض), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

In another *hadīth* reported by Ibn Mas'ud (رض), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(هُنَّ الظَّاغِنُونَ).

"Those who exceed the limits have perished!". He repeated this thrice. (*Muslim*: 2670).

According to a report by 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb (رض), the Prophet (ﷺ) has also said,

(لَا تُطْرُونِي كَمَا أَطْرَتِ النَّصَارَى عَيْسَى بْنُ مَرْيَمَ، إِنَّمَا أَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ).

"Do not overrate me as the Christians had done with respect to 'Īsā ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary), for I am only a servant of Allāh and His Messenger". (*Bukhārī*: 3445).

In this *hadīth* the Prophet (ﷺ) warned his adherents not to go too far in extolling him, lest they reach the extent of saying of him what the Christians had said of Jesus by calling him Lord or God. He further declared that he was only a servant of Allāh, and that he should be described as Allāh had described him: 'A servant of Allāh and His Messenger'. However, those who have gone astray insisted on disobeying the Prophet's order and perpetrating what he has forbidden.

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I- A *sahīh hadīth*, according to both Ḥākim and Dhahabī.

Thus, they strongly disagreed with him, went beyond the limit in extolling him and said of him exactly what the Christians have said concerning Jesus or close to that. Those erring people ask the Prophet (ﷺ) to forgive their sins, to dispel their sorrows, cure their illnesses, and so on. Such requests can only be answered by the one and only God, Allāh, while directing them to a created being is an act of *ghuluww* in religious matters.

## 2.4 Polytheism, disbelief and the types thereof

Undoubtedly, every Muslim has a lot to gain by knowing what polytheism and disbelief are, including the causes of both, their means and their types. Provided that his intention for such a knowledge is to protect himself against their evils or plights. Allāh loves to see His creatures knowing what is right so that they may love and follow it, and knowing the wrong path in order to hate and avoid it. A Muslim is not only required to identify what is good and implement it, but also to recognize evil and beware of it. The two most authentic collections of the *hadīth* quote Hudhaifah bin al-Yamān, a Companion of the Prophet to have said, "People used to ask Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) about good thing, but I used to ask him about the evil one, lest it should befall me". (*Bukhārī*: 7084; *Muslim*: 1847). And in the words of 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه), "It is only when we have people born and grew up as Muslims without any idea of pre-Islamic paganism that the handhold of Islam will begin to retract little by little".

Many verses of the Glorious Qur'ān have spoken on polytheism and disbelief, cautioned against involvement in either, and exposed their bad consequences in this life and in the hereafter. Besides, this constitutes a principal objective of the message of the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ تُفْسِدُ الْأَيْمَنَ وَلَتَسْتَيْرِنَ سَبِيلَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴾

**And thus do We detail the *ayahs* (verses, signs, etc.), and [thus] the way of the criminals will become evident.** (*al-An'ām*: 55).

In the coming pages, we shall discuss some important issues relating to this topic.

### 2.4.1 Polytheism (*Shirk*)

#### a) Definition:

From a linguistic viewpoint, the word *shirk* simply means putting two things on an equal footing. But a view of the same word from an Islamic perspective gives room for a wider import of two subdivisions: general and specific meanings.

The general meaning of *Shirk* implies believing in someone or something as being equal to Allāh in what should be exclusively for Him. This is also subdivided into three types as follows:

1- *Shirk* in Allāh's Lordship. This happens when one picks an equal for Allāh in a Lordship-related attribute, or ascribe such an attribute to any other being. The Lordship-related attributes include: creation and the act of providing for the created, giving and taking of life, as well as the running of the universe. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿هَلْ مِنْ خَلْقٍ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِنَفْكُوكُمْ﴾

Is there any creator other than Allāh who provides for you from the heaven and earth? There is no deity worthy of worship save He. How then are you deluded? (Fātiḥ: 3).

2- *Shirk* with regards to Allāh's names and attributes. That is to invent a peer for Him in any of His names or qualities, for He has said,

﴿إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ الظَّاهِرِ وَهُوَ أَتَبِيعُ الْبَصِيرَ﴾

Nothing is like Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing, (al-Shāra: 11).

3- *Shirk* in Allāh's Divinity. This is to give any of His divine characteristics or the right of being worshiped to another being. This

may be through prayer, fasting, supplication, seeking help, animal sacrifices, vow, etc. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَوَجَّهُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا بِخُوبَةٍ كَحْبَرٍ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ ﴾

And [yet], there are among the people who take other than Allāh as equals [to Him]. They love them as they love Allāh. (al-Baqarah: 165).

As for the specific meaning of *Shirk*, this implies giving to Allāh a rival whom one will also invoke, ask for his/its intercession, love, and even see as his/her hope. Each time the word *Shirk* is mentioned either in the Glorious Qur'ān or the *hadīth*, this special meaning of the word usually comes first to mind.

#### b) Proofs on the condemnation and danger of *Shirk*

The Islamic texts have censured *Shirk* and warned against it in various ways. They have similarly demonstrated the danger and grave consequences that the polytheists incur in this life and in the hereafter.

- Allāh called *Shirk* the 'unforgivable sin', unless the polytheist repents before his death. He says,

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرِكَ بِهِ وَغَفْرَانُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ ﴾

Indeed, Allāh forgives not associating partners with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. (al-Nisā': 48).

- Allāh also described it as the worst of all injustices. He says,

﴿ إِنَّ شَرِكَةَ الْأَنْفُسِ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

*Shirk* is indeed, a gross injustice. (Luqmān: 13).

- Also, Allāh has described *Shirk* as capable of destroying one's good deeds. He says,

﴿وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَهُ بِعْضَ عَمَلِكَ وَلَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴾.

And surely, It has been revealed to you and to those before you [that] if you should associate [anything with Allāh] your deed would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers. (al-Zumar: 65).

- He also described it as implying disrespect for the Lord of all beings, and claiming an equal for Him. Allāh says,

﴿فَالْأُولَاءِ هُمُ فِيهَا يَخْصِمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ تَأْلِيمُنَّ كُلِّ لَقَبْلِ شَيْءٍ ﴿٩٧﴾ إِذْ سُوِّيَ كُلُّ كُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾.

They will say while they dispute therein, "By Allāh, we were indeed in manifest error. When we equated you [false gods] with the Lord of all beings". (al-Shūrā : 96-98).

- Furthermore, Allāh declared that any one who dies as a polytheist will be permanent inhabitant of the Hellfire. He says,

﴿إِنَّمَا، مَنْ يُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ الشَّرَّ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴾.

Indeed, he who associates others with Allāh - Allāh has forbidden him Paradise, and the Fire will be his abode. And there are not for the wrongdoers any helpers. (al- Mā'idah: 72).

Proofs of various kinds in this respect are many in the Glorious Qur'ān.

### c) The cause of *Shirk*

The root cause of *Shirk* and the motive behind its occurrence among mankind is their extreme dogma regarding the righteous and highly esteemed people, and their usual excess in extolling or praising them. Allāh says,

﴿وَقَالُوا لَا نَدْرِئُ إِلَهَكُمْ وَلَا نَذْرِئُ وَدًا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعْوَثَ وَنَسْرًا ﴾٢٣  
وَلَا تَرُدُّ الظَّاهِلِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا ﴾٢٤

And they said, "Never leave your gods; and leave neither *Wadd*, nor *Sawā'*, nor *Yaghūth*, nor *Ya'ūq*, nor *Nasr*. And already they have misled many. And [O Allāh!], grant no increase to the wrongdoers save error. (Nūh: 23-24).

These are names of some righteous men among the people of Nūh, after whose death their contemporaries made their statues and named the same after them. Although their aim was to glorify the men, immortalize their remembrance and commemorate their virtues, they ended up worshipping them.

An indication to this is found in a narration by Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنهما who said, "The idols which the people of Nūh had worshipped, later became objects of worship among the Arabs. The *Kalb* tribe at *Daumat I Jandal*<sup>(1)</sup> used to worship *Wadd*, *Hudhail* were worshipping *Suwā'*, while *Yaghūth* was first worshipped by *Murād* tribe, then by *Banu Ghutaif* of *Jurf* near *Saba'*. The *Hamadans* took *Ya'ūq* as their object of worship, and the *DhilKalā'* tribe of *Himyar* opted for *Nasr*. The aforementioned names of idols were initially those of some virtuous men among the people of Nūh. After the death of those righteous men, Satan inspired their people to place idols, which should be named after them, at the places where they used to sit

I- A village in the northern part of Arabian Peninsula. Presently, it is a famous town in al- Jauf, one of the Saudi Arabian provinces. Cf. *al- Ḥamawi*, *Yāqut*, *Mu'jam al-Buldan* vol. ii p.487; Junaidil, Sa'd, *Mu'jam al-Amkinat al-Wārida bi-khrafa fi Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Riyadh: 1419 A.H, p. 231. (Translator)

during their lifetime. They did as Satan commanded them to do, but never worshipped the statues. After that generation, the reason for what they did concerning the statues of those men became obscure, and thus the new generation adopted the worship of their idols". (*Bukhārī*: 4920).

As part of his commentary on the above mentioned verse:

﴿قَاتُلُوا لِأَنَّهُمْ كُفَّارٌ﴾

**And they said, "Never leave your gods..."**, Ibn Jarīr al-Tabārī narrated from Muḥammad bin Qais who said, "They [Wadd, Suwā' ...] were a group of virtuous people who had others who followed their example. After their death, it came to the minds of their followers that if they produced portraits of their deceased leaders, that would give them more enthusiasm for engaging in acts of worship as long as they remember those righteous men. They, therefore, made the portraits [without adopting them as objects of worship]. After their demise, Satan rushed to tell the succeeding generation that their ancestors used to worship those men, and that for their sake, they were usually blessed with rain. Thus, that generation worshipped them<sup>(1)</sup>".

By so doing they have combined two evils, their devotion to the graves of the virtuous men, and carving the portraits which they later put in the men's sitting-places and began to visit them. The two acts were the major causes of *Shirk* for the first time in human history, and remain the principal means thereof anytime, any place.

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I- *Tafsīr al-Tabārī*, vol. xii, p. 254.

#### d) Types of *Shirk*

*Shirk* has two types, namely: major and minor *Shirk*.

The major *Shirk* means associating something with Allāh as a peer and worshipping both. This sends one outside the fold of Islam and destroys whatever good deeds he/she might have done in the past. Moreover, if one should die in a situation like this, he will live permanently in the Hellfire, where he will never cease to live, and yet the punishment therein will never be reduced. This major *Shirk* is divisible into four as follows:

#### 1- *Shirk* in connection with supplication.

Supplication is a high-ranking act of worship in Islam. In fact, the very core of worship, according to a statement by the Prophet (ﷺ) that, (الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ) i.e. "Supplication is the worship" (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. iv p. 267; *Sunan Tirmidhi*: *hadīth* no. 2969<sup>(1)</sup>). Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ أَذْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الظَّرِفَةَ يَسْتَكْرِهُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيِّدُ الْخَلُقَوْنَ جَهَنَّمَ دَكَّاجِرِبَ﴾

And your Lord said, "Call upon Me; I will respond to you. Indeed, those who scorn My worship will enter Hell, disgraced". (*Ghāfir*: 60).

Since supplication is an act of worship, directing it to anyone other than Allāh is *Shirk*. Accordingly, whoever invokes a Prophet, an angel, a righteous man or woman, a tomb, a stone or any other created being has become polytheist and disbeliever. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

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I- The *hadīth* is "*ḥasan-sahīh*", according to *Tirmidhi*.

﴿ وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِنْهَا مُخْرَجٌ لَّا يُرَدُّ يَوْمًا حِسَابًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكُفَّارُ وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

**And whoever invokes besides Allāh another deity for which he has no proof, then his reckoning is only with his Lord [Allāh]. Surely, the unbelievers will not succeed.** (al-Mu'minūn: 117).

That supplication is an act of worship, while offering it to anyone besides Allāh is an act of *Shirk* (polytheism) is further proofed in the following verse:

﴿ فَإِذَا رَأَكُوكُمْ فِي الْفَلَقِ دَعُوا اللَّهَ مُخَاصِّيًّا لَّهُ الَّذِينَ قَلَّمَا بَخْنَتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ إِذَا هُمْ شُرِكُوكُنَّ ﴾

**And when they board a ship, they supplicate Allāh, sincere to Him in religion. But when He delivers them safe to the land, at once they associate others with Him.** (al-'Ankabūt: 65).

Here, Allāh (ﷻ) states that the polytheists associate partners with Him only in states of well-being, but worship Him alone in hard and trying times. Now imagine the case of a person who associates others with Allāh, whether he lives in affluence or he is in distress!

## 2- *Shirk* of intention and volition.

This happens when a man's intention for performing his acts of worship is purely material or just to show off, –as people with sheer hypocrisy usually do– and aims to gain neither Allāh's pleasure nor the blessing of the hereafter. Such a person has committed a major *Shirk*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ مَنْ كَانَ تُرِيدُ الْحِجَّةَ الَّتِي وَرَيْتُكُمْ تُوفِّي إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُنَّ فِيهَا لَا يُنْجِحُونَ ۝ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَنْ يَسَّرَ اللَّهُمَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا الْكَارِثُ وَكَبِيرُكُمْ مَا صَنَعُوكُمْ فِيهَا وَنَطَّلُ مَا كَلَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝ ﴾

Whoever desires the life of this world and its adornments- We fully repay them for their deeds therein, and they, therein, will not be wronged. They are those for whom there is nothing in the hereafter except the Fire. And vain is whatever they did therein, and worthless is that which they used to do. (Hūd: 15-16).

This type of *Shirk* is very critical and dangerous.

### 3- *Shirk* in obedience.

Whoever obeys any of Allāh's creatures either in making lawful what He has proscribed, or prohibiting what He permits has actually taken whom he obeys to that extent as other gods besides Allāh. He has thus committed a Major *Shirk*, provided that he believes in such people's right to allow or forbid those things either for him or for any other fellow, even when he knows that their judgement in this respect is against the teachings of Islam. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿أَفَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ الْجِنَّاتِ مَرْبُوطَةٌ بِأَنْ دُورَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالنَّسِيجُ أَنَّكُمْ تَرْبِيْكُمْ وَمَا أَمْرُوا إِلَّا يَعْبُدُونَا إِنَّهَا وَحْدَاهُ إِلَهٌ إِلَّا هُوَ شَيْخُهُنَّةٍ عَنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ كُلُّهُنَّ﴾

They [The Jews and the Christians] took their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allāh, and [have also taken as lord] the Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary). And they were only commanded to worship just one God; there is no deity worthy of worship except Him. Glorified be He [Exalted is He] above whatever they associate [with Him]. (al-Tawbah: 31).

An unambiguous exposition of this verse would reveal that obeying their scholars and the devout among them, rather than invoking them, is the subject matter here. Thus, when 'Adiyy bin

Hātim (رضي الله عنه) remarked saying, "We (Christians<sup>(1)</sup>) never worshipped them", the Prophet (ﷺ) explained to him that their compliance with the orders of those religious leaders, which happened to be the negation of Allāh's commandment is, in fact, their worshipping them. He said,

(أَلَيْسُ بِحَرَمٍ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مِنْهُ وَنَهَى عَنْ مَا حَرَمَ اللَّهُ فَتَحَلَّوْهُ).  
Is it not true that they forbid what Allāh has permitted and allow what He has forbidden, and you follow them in both?

"Is it not true that they forbid what Allāh has permitted and allow what He has forbidden, and you follow them in both"? 'Adiyy answered in the affirmative. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "That is how you worship them". (*Sunan Tirmidhi*: 3095; *Tabarāni*, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* vol. xvii, p. 92<sup>(2)</sup>).

#### 4- *Shirk* in love.

That is love in conjunction with servitude, and usually necessitates glorification, exaltation, humility and submission to the beloved. This kind of love is due to Allāh alone, and anyone who offers such to other than Him has committed a major *Shirk*. The proof of this comes in the following Qur'ānic verse:

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَكْفُرُ بِمَا نَوَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ أَنَّدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَمَنْ يُحِبُّ إِلَهٌ وَالَّذِينَ مَا آتَيْنَا أَنَّهُمْ  
جَاهِلُونَ﴾

And [yet], there are among the people who take other than Allāh as equals [to Him]. They love them as they love Allāh, but those who believe are stronger in their love for Allāh. (*al-Baqarah*: 165).

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1- 'Adiyy (رضي الله عنه) was once a Christian before he embraced Islam. (Translator)

2- A *hasan hadīth*, in the opinion of Tirmidhi, one of its narrators.

**Minor *Shirk***, on the other hand, is either means of the major *shirk* or any act or saying branded as *shirk* in the religious texts, but falls short of the standard of a major one. The rule concerning a minor polytheist is the same as that of perpetrator of a capital offence in Islam, whose fate will only be decided in the hereafter according to Allāh's volition. Some instances of minor *Shirk* include the following:

#### a) Minimal Showing-off

According to a narration by Imam Ahmād and others, the Prophet (ﷺ) once addressed his Companions saying, "**What I fear most that you might commit is the minor *Shirk***". They said, "But what is the minor *Shirk*, O Allāh's Messenger"? He replied,

(الرياء، يقول الله تعالى يوم القيمة إذا جازى الناس بأعمالهم: اذهبوا إلى الذين كنتم ترازون في الدنيا، فانظروا هل تجدون عندهم جراء).

**Showing off<sup>(1)</sup>.** Allāh will say on the Day of Resurrection after He had recompensed mankind for their deeds, "Go to those whom you would have liked to see you and praise you for whatever good deed you performed while you were alive, and see then if you could get any reward from them". (*Musnad Ahmād* vol. v, p. 428<sup>(2)</sup>).

#### b) Saying, "What Allāh, and you too may will". (*Mā shā Allāh wa shi'ta*).

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1- That is in matters of worship.

2- The chain of transmission for this *hadīth* is good, said al-Mundhīrī in his *al-Targhib wa al-Tarhib* vol. i, p. 48, while al-Haithamī also adjudged the narrators to be men of the *sahīh hadīths*. *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. i, p. 102.

Concerning this, Abu Dawūd narrated in his *Sunan* that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(لَا تَقُولُوا مَا شاءَ اللَّهُ وَشَاءَ فَلَمَنْ، وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا مَا شاءَ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ شَاءَ فَلَامْ).

Never say, 'What Allāh and so and so person may will', but rather, you should say, "What Allāh may will, then what so and so may will"<sup>(1)</sup>". (*Sunan Abu Dawūd*: 4980<sup>(2)</sup>).

c) Saying, "But for Allāh's and so and so person's intervention, this or that would have happened", or "But for the presence of the duck, the thieves would have gained entrance into the house", etc.

According to Ibn Abi Hātim<sup>(3)</sup>, Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said in his comment on the meaning of Allāh's saying:

﴿فَلَا جُنَاحُ لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَرَكُوكُمْ﴾

**So do not attribute equals to Allāh, while you know [that He alone has the right to be worshipped].** (al-Baqarah: 22).

"[Attributing to Allāh] equals is an act of *Shirk*, which is more inconspicuous than the creeping of an ant on a black rock in the darkness of night. It is to say, 'By Allāh, by your life, oh so and so person, and mine!', or 'Had there not been the duck, or the small dog of this or that person in the house, the thieves would have gained entrance'. Or that a man should say to his fellows, 'If Allāh and you too will'. Or the expression: 'But for Allāh's and so and so person's intervention, this or that would have happened'. You should not mention any person in these cases, for doing so is an act of *Shirk*".

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- 1- That is if it is necessary to add the name of such a person in the statement. However, to say "What Allāh alone may will" is far better. (Translator)
  - 2- The chain of transmission is *zālīh* (acceptable), according to Dhahabi in *Mukhtasar al-Baiaqi* 1/140/2.
  - 3- Ibn Abi Hātim, *al-Tafsīr* vol. i, p. 62.

### **The difference between major and minor *Shirk***

The two are different from each other in many ways, the most important of which are as follows:

1- Major *Shirk* is an unforgivable sin, should its perpetrator die before repenting. As for the minor one, the perpetrator, whether he repents or not, may be forgiven if Allāh so wishes.

2- No previous act of worship will be valid the moment one engages in any act of major *Shirk*. The minor *Shirk*, however, nullifies only the act with which it occurs.

3- A perpetrator of minor *Shirk* remains in the fold of Islam, but that of major one has become a non-Muslim.

4- Major *Shirk* qualifies its perpetrator to live permanently in Hellfire, and for him Paradise has been forbidden. Minor *Shirk*, on the other hand, is a sin just like any other sin.

### 2.4.2 Disbelief (*Kufr*)

#### a) Definition:

Linguistically, *Kufr* is an Arabic word meaning: concealment or the act of covering something. In Islamic terms, *Kufr* is the opposite of Faith (*Imān*), and as such, lack of belief in Allāh and His Messenger. *Kufr* does not necessarily coincide with a denial of the divine message; as some other factors, including doubt or scepticism, deliberate avoidance of the truth as a result of envy, pride and submission to certain misleading caprices, may also be responsible for being an unbeliever.

#### b) Types of Disbelief:

The two types of *Kufr* are major and minor disbelief. With the former, one will be eligible to be permanently incarcerated in Hellfire, while the latter also subjects one to a transitory, but not permanent, punishment of the Fire.

##### i) Major Disbelief:

There are five sub-divisions of this type of unbelief. These are:

1- Disbelief as a result of denial. This means lack of belief in the truthfulness of Allāh's Messengers. Anyone who belies their message, either overtly or covertly, is an unbeliever. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ أَفْرَغَ اللَّهَ عَلَى أَشْوَارِكَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَبَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذَا جَاءَهُ أَيْسَرٌ فِي جَهَنَّمْ مَتَوْكِي لِلْكُفَّارِ﴾

And who is more unjust than he who invented a lie against Allāh, or denied the truth when it came to him. Is there not a home in Hell for the unbelievers? (al-'Ankabūt: 68).

2- Disbelief through rejection and arrogance. This is when a person arrogantly and stubbornly refuses to abide by the rule of a Messenger of Allāh or comply with his order, in spite of being convinced of his truthfulness and the genuineness of his mission. The proof of this in the Book of Allāh goes thus:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ أَسْجُدُوا لِأَدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْرِيزُ الْجِنِّيُّ وَأَنْتَ كَفَرْتَ بِكُنْهِيَّةِ إِنَّ الْكُفَّارِ﴾

And [remember] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Ādām". They fell prostrate, all save *Iblīs* (Satan), who refused and behaved arrogantly. And was one of the unbelievers. (al-Baqarah: 34).

3- Sceptical disbelief. That is when one remains unconvinced of the truthfulness of Allāh's Messengers. It is also called "Disbelieving on the grounds of suspicion" (*Kufr al-Zann*), implying thereby lack of certainty or being indecisive. The proof comes in the body of the following Qur'ānic text:

﴿وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ طَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَطْعَنَّ أَنْ يُبَدِّدَ هَذِهِ أَبْدَاهُ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَمَا أَطْعَنَّ السَّاعَةَ قَابِسَةً وَلَيْنَ رُدِدَتْ إِلَى رَبِّ الْأَجْدَنَ حَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُسْقَلًا ﴿٣٠﴾ قَالَ لَهُمْ صَاحِبَهُ وَهُوَ يَحَاوِرُهُ أَكْفَرْتَ بِاللَّهِ خَلَقَكَ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّكَ رِبْلَا ﴿٣١﴾ لِئَكَنَّهُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَلَا أَشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا﴾

And he entered his garden while he was unjust to himself. He said, 'I do not think this will ever perish. Likewise, I do not believe the Hour [Resurrection] will occur, and if indeed, I am eventually brought back to my Lord [on the Day], I will surely find better than this as a resort'. His comrade said to him during their

conversation, 'Have you disbelieved in He Who created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, and then fashioned you a man? But as for me, He is Allāh, my Lord, and none shall I associate with my Lord as partner'. (al-Kahf : 35-38).

4- Disbelief as a result of deliberate avoidance of the truth. That is to keep oneself completely away from the religion of Islam, by turning a deaf ear to the divine message and paying no attention whatsoever to it. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَنْ آيٍ نَّذَرُوا مُغْرِضُونَ﴾

**But those who disbelieve turn away from that of which they are warned.** (al-Aḥqāf: 3).

5- Hypocritical unbelief or insincerity in the matters of Faith. That is in the case of someone who pretends to be a believer, while he is really an infidel<sup>(1)</sup>. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ دَانُوا لِمَنْ كَفَرُوا قُطْعَةً عَلَىٰ مُؤْمِنِيهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ﴾

**That is because they believed and then disbelieved; their hearts are therefore sealed, and so they do not understand.** (al-Munāfiqūn: 3).

Hypocrisy itself is of two types. These are:

a) Hypocrisy in Faith, which is also a major unbelief and capable of sending one out of the fold of Islam. This hypocrisy is subdivided into six, namely: Belying the Messenger of Allāh, or any part of his message; harbouring the hatred of Allāh's Messenger or of his

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I- Ibn al-Qayyim, *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, vol. i, p. 346.

mission; as well as being happy when the mission or religion preached by the Messenger of Allāh suffers a set-back, or being unhappy about a victory recorded by such a mission.

**b) Practical Hypocrisy.** This is a minor unbelief and, as such, does not nullify the culprit's faith, even though it is a capital offence. Some instances of practical hypocrisy are mentioned in the following *hadīth*:  
 (أَرْبَعُ مِنْ كُنْ فِيهِ كَانَ مُنَافِقًا حَالَصًا، وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي حُصْلَةٍ مِنْهُنَّ كَانَ فِي حُصْلَةٍ مِنَ النَّفَاقِ حَقِيقَةً يَدْعُهَا: إِذَا أَزْتَمْنَ حَانَ، وَإِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ غَدَرَ، وَإِذَا خَاصَمَ فَجَوَ).

"Anyone with the following four characteristics is a downright hypocrite, and whoever has any of them has got in him a feature of hypocrisy until he gives it up. [They are:] If he is entrusted, he betrays the trust. If he speaks, he tells a lie. If he makes a covenant, he proves treacherous. And if he quarrels, he behaves in an unfair and dishonourable manner". (*Bukhārī*: 34; *Muslim*: 58).

The Prophet (ﷺ) has also said in another *hadīth*:

(آئِهُ الْمُنَافِقِ تِلْاثٌ: إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَإِذَا أَزْتَمْنَ حَانَ).

"The identifying characteristics of a hypocrite are three: Telling lies whenever he speaks, intentional breaching of self-made promises, and proving to be dishonest each time he is entrusted with something". (*Bukhārī*: 33).

## ii) Minor Disbelief:

It is the unbelief that neither strips the culprit of his faith nor subjects him/her to everlasting punishment in Hell, but constitutes a dire threat of being punished by Allāh. This type of unbelief is also

known as *Kufr al-Ni'mah* (Ingratitude), and any mention of the word *kufr* in the religious texts must be understood in this context, given that the related act falls short of what we can call a major unbelief. Examples of this include what is mentioned in the following texts:

Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَصَرَبَ اللَّهُ مُثْلِكَ قَرِيبَةً كَانَتْ إِمَامَةً مُطْمَئِنَةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغْدًا مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنَّعِيرَ اللَّهَ فَإِذَا هَا اللَّهُ لِيَسَ الْجُوعُ وَالْحَوْفُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ﴾

And Allāh presents an example; a city which was safe and secure, its provision coming to it in abundance from all places, but it denied the favours of Allāh. So Allāh made it taste hunger and fear for what they had been doing. (*al-Nahl*: 112).

Some *hadīths* of the Prophet (ﷺ) also read:

(الشَّانُ فِي النَّاسِ هُمْ كُفَّارٌ، الظُّنُونُ فِي النَّسْبِ وَالنِّيَاحَةُ عَلَى الْمُبَتَّ).

"Two practices on the part of men are regarded as unbelief; Defaming another person's genealogy, and wailing for the dead". (*Muslim*: 67).

(لَا تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي كُفَّارًا يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ).

"Do not revert to unbelief after me by striking the necks of one another (killing each other)". (*Bukhāri*: 121; *Muslim*: 65).

The *Kufr* mentioned in the above texts and other similar ones is minor disbelief, whose perpetrator remains a Muslim. Allāh (ﷻ) has also said,

﴿ وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَايْنِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَفْسَدُوا فَاصْلَحُوَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ يَنْتَ إِذْدَهُمَا عَلَى الْأَخْرَى فَقُتِلُوا أَلَّا يَنْتَ حَقَّ يَعْنَى إِلَّا أَنْ يَرِيَ اللَّهُ فَإِنْ فَاجَرْتُ فَاصْلَحُوَا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَفْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴾ ١٠ إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَةَ إِلَّا حُوَّرَةٌ فَاصْلَحُوَا بَيْنَ الْخَوَيْكُرَ وَانْتَعُوا اللَّهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَرْجُونَ ﴾

And if two parties among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight [you all] the oppressing party until it returns to the ordinance of Allāh. And if it does, you should then make reconciliation between them in justice. And act equitably, Allāh really loves those who act justly. The believers are but brothers, so reconcile between your brothers. And fear Allāh; that you may receive mercy. (al-Hujrāt: 9, 10).

Thus, Allāh referred to both parties as "believers" in spite of fighting one another. He also said,

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرِكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكَ بِهِ فَقُدْمَ أَفْرَى إِنَّمَا عَظِيمًا ﴾

Indeed, Allāh does not forgive association of partners with him. But He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates partners with Allāh has certainly invented a tremendous sin. (al-Nisā': 48).

This verse indicates that, based on what Allāh may will, the perpetrator of any sin except *Shirk* will either be completely pardoned by Allāh, or be subjected first to punishment in proportion to his misdeed. As for *Shirk*, the verse has likewise spoken plainly enough that such is an unpardonable offence in the sight of Almighty Allāh, who has also said,

﴿إِنَّمَا مَن يُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَمَ اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا أَنْوَهَ إِلَيْهِ الْأَنْوَارُ وَمَا مَا يَنْظَلِيمُونَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ﴾.

**Whoever associates partners with Allāh, for such Allāh has indeed forbidden Paradise, and his abode will be Fire. For wrongdoers, there will be no helpers.** (al- Mā'idah: 72).

## 2.5 Claiming the knowledge of unseen and the like

Unseen (*Ghaib*) is any thing of the past, present or future affairs that is hidden for human minds or sights. Allāh alone, and none else, has the knowledge of unseen. He says,

﴿فَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ غَيْبٌ إِلَّا لَهُ﴾

**Say, "None in the heavens and on earth knows the unseen, but Allāh".** (al-Naml: 65).

﴿إِنَّهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

**He has [the knowledge of] unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth.** (al-Kahf: 26).

﴿عَلَيْهِ الْغَيْبُ وَالْأَنْبَدُ وَالْكَبِيرُ الصَّفَّالُ﴾

**He is the One who knows the unseen and the witnessed, the Grand, the Exalted.** (al-Ra'd: 9).

None but Allāh (ﷻ) alone knows the unseen, not even an angel nor a Messenger of His, let alone any other inferior creature. Here is what Allāh said about Nūh, His prophet (ﷻ),

﴿وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَانَاتُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ﴾

**And I do not tell you that I have the treasures of Allāh, neither do I know the unseen.** (Hūd: 31).

As He has also said of Hūd (ﷻ),

﴿قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَعْلَمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَيْلُغُكَ مَا أَرْسَلْتُ بِهِ﴾

**He [Hūd] said, 'The knowledge [of what you asked for] is with Allāh alone. And I convey to you that with which I was sent'.** (al-Ahqāf: 23 ).

Allāh also commanded His Prophet, Muhammad (ﷺ) saying,

﴿ قُلْ لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ ﴾

Say, 'I do not tell you that I have the treasures of Allāh, and I do not know the unseen'. (al-An'ām: 50).

Furthermore, He said,

﴿ وَعَلِمَ اللَّهُ مَا دَارَ مِنَ الْأَسْمَاءِ كُلُّهَا إِذَا عَرَضُوهُمْ عَلَى الْحَكِيمِ كَمَا فَعَالَ أَنْبُو فِي يَاسِنَةِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنَّكُمْ مُنْذَرُونَ ﴾ ﴿ قَالُوا سَيِّدُنَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾

And He [Allāh] taught Ādām all the names. Then He showed them to the angels and said, 'Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful'. They said, 'Glory be to You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise'. (al-Baqarah: 31, 32).

However, Allāh (ﷻ) may choose to disclose some of the unseen to some of His creatures through revelation. He says accordingly,

﴿ عَلِمْتُمُ الْغَيْبَ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى عَيْنِيهِمْ أَحَدًا ﴿٥٦﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ أَرَضَنِي مِنْ رَسُولِي فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصِيدًا ﴿٥٧﴾ لَيَعْلَمَ أَنَّ قَدْ أَتَلَّغُرُوا يَسَّارِكُمْ وَأَحَاطُوا بِمَا لَدُونَهُمْ وَلَا يَخْفَى  
كُلُّ شَيْءٍ عَنْهُمْ ﴾

He is the One who knows the unseen, and does not disclose His [knowledge of] unseen to anyone. Except for Messengers whom He has approved of, and He sends before him [i.e. each Messenger] and behind him observers. That He may make evident that they have conveyed the messages of their Lord; and He has encompassed whatever is with them, and has kept count of all things. (al-Jinn: 26-28).

What is being referred to in the above verses is the relative rather than the absolute unseen. The former, even though is unseen to some, but not so to other people. Whereas the absolute unseen is known only to Allāh (ﷻ), and who would dare claim to have such knowledge when Allāh has restricted its possession to Himself alone!

It is therefore incumbent upon every Muslim to be watchful of quacks and liars who invent lies against Allāh and claim to know the unseen. This folk include sorcerers, soothsayers and the like, who have gone astray, misled many, and yet, remain far from the right path.

We shall now touch on some of the tools those people employ to arrogate to themselves the knowledge of unseen, and, as a result, mislead the laymen and the ignorant among Muslims, and even undermine their belief.

### 1- Sorcery/Magic:

In a pure linguistic sense, one may refer to anything with an obscure or indistinct cause as '*sīhr*' (sorcery). But in a narrow technical import, the word '*sīhr*' means charms, spells and magical knots that may have fatal or less damaging effect on a body or soul, or stir up marital discord between two spouses, if Allāh had so willed.

Sorcery is an act of disbelief, and, ipso facto, a sorcerer is an unbeliever who will have no portion of the benefits of the hereafter. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَنَاهَىٰ الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الْشَّيْطَانَ كَفَرَ كَفَرُوا يَعْلَمُونَ النَّاسُ الْيَتَّخِرُونَ مَا أُزْلَىٰ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِإِيمَانِ هَرُوتَ وَمَرْوَتَ وَمَا يَعْلَمُانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَقَّ يَقُولُ إِنَّمَا يَخْنُقُ فِتْنَةً فَلَا يَكْفُرُ فَيَعْلَمُونَ وَمِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّغُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْأَرْضِ وَرَوْجَوْهُ وَمَا هُمْ بِصَارِبِينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا يَادُنَّ اللَّهِ وَيَعْلَمُونَ مَا يَصْرَفُهُمْ وَلَا يَسْعَهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لِمَنِ اشْرَأَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَلَمْ يَنْكِنْ مَا شَرَّفُوا بِهِ أَنفُسُهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

And they followed [instead] what the devils related [falsely, concerning magic] during the reign of Sulimān (Solomon). It was not Sulimān who disbelieved, but the devils did, teaching people magic and that which was revealed to the two angels, Hārūt and Mārūt at Babylon. The two angels would not teach anyone unless they had said, 'We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve [by learning magic from us']. And yet they [the people] learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife. But they cannot harm anyone through it except by Allāh's permission. And they learn that which harms them and does not benefit them. And they knew for sure, that he who purchased it [magic] would have no share in the hereafter. And indeed, wretched is that for which they sold themselves, if only they knew. (al-Baqarah: 102).

Blowing upon knots<sup>(1)</sup> is also a form of sorcery. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

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I- This is an old form of witchcraft known in the Arabian Peninsula. (Translator)

﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ﴿١﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ﴿٢﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ  
شَرِّ النَّجَّارِ فِي الْمَغْرِبِ ﴿٣﴾ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ﴿٤﴾

Say, 'I seek refuge in [Allāh] the Lord of daybreak. From the evil of that which He has created. And from the evil of the darkness of the night when it is intense. And from the evil of those who practise witchcraft by blowing upon knots. And from the evil of an envier when he envies. (al-Falaq: 1-5).

## 2- Astrology:

This means taking the study of the movements of stars or other heavenly body as a premise to predict occurrence or otherwise of certain incidents on the earth. According to Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(من اقتبس علماً من النجوم فقد اقتبس شعبة من السحر زاد ما زاد).  
"Whoever learns a branch of astrology has acquired a branch of sorcery. And if he should go further in learning it, he would also be adding to what he acquires of sorcery<sup>(1)</sup>". (Abū Dāwūd: 3905).

## 3- Predicting on the basis of purported restraint from a bird or manifestation of a sign in drawn lines:

Qaṭān bin Qabīṣah narrated on the authority of his father who said, I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying,

I- Or of the sin of a sorcerer. See: Al-Manāwi, *Fa'id al-Qadīr* vol. vi p. 80. (Translator)

(العيافة والطيره والظرف من الجحش).

*Al-Iyāfah, al-Tiyarah* (Premonition, or evil omen etc.) *and al-Tarq* are all makings of the Devil (i.e. they are all magic).

(*Abū Dāwūd*: 3907; *Musnād Aḥmad* vol. iii, p. 477).

*Al-Iyāfah* is any alleged restraint from birds, as well as optimism or pessimism on account of their names, sounds or passage.

*Al-Tarq* means magical lines, which are usually drawn on sand, or pebble-casting for the purpose of claiming the knowledge of unseen.

#### 4- Fortune-telling:

This is another way of making undue claims of knowing the unseen. The origin of this practice goes back to what some *jinn* eavesdrop from angels, and is later passed to fortune-tellers. Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) reported a saying of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) that:

من أتى كاهناً فصدقه بما يقول فقد كفر بما أنزل على محمدٍ.

"Whoever goes to a fortune-teller and believes in what he tells-then he has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad".  
(*Abū Dāwūd*: 3904; *Musnād Aḥmad* vol. ii, p. 429; *al-Mustadrak* vol. i, p. 50<sup>(1)</sup>).

#### 5- Writing *Abjad* alphabet:

Another magical practice, which involves giving each letter of the alphabet certain digits of numbers. A sorcerer then applies such numbers mathematically on names of human beings, places or times, and consequently predicts the fortune or misfortune of the parties concerned.

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I- This *ḥadīth*, according to both Ḥākim and Dhahabi, is *sahīh*, conforming to the standards set by both Bukhārī and Muslim.

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said of the perpetrators of this kind of sorcery and those who gaze at stars<sup>(1)</sup>, "I couldn't see how such people can have any share [of mercy] in the sight of Allāh". (*Musannaf Abū Razzāq* vol. xi, p. 26).

**6- Palmistry, cup reading<sup>(2)</sup>,** etc., are other fraudulent methods being employed by some to claim the knowledge of what befalls people in future, such as death and life, poverty and wealth, health and illness, and so on.

#### 7- Necromancy:

The practitioners here allege that they can bring back the souls of the dead and ask them questions pertaining to the afterlife blessing, punishment, etc. This is another scope of quackery and Satanic sorcery, aimed at nothing save distortion of people's creed and promotion of immorality. It is also a ploy to deceive the uninformed people and unjustly consume their wealth, as well as a means of claiming the knowledge of unseen.

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1- i.e. for magical purposes as mentioned in '2' above. (Translator)

2- Cup reading is another dubious art of fortunetelling known in some parts of the world. As in palmistry, a cup-reading fortune-teller depends on the configuration of lines and bumps in an almost empty coffee cup to determine the fortune or otherwise of his client. (Translator)

### 8- Evil omen:

This implies having a premonition of something bad to befall one on account of what he had seen of the movement of birds, antelopes etc. either from his right-hand to the left or vice-versa. Such a practice is another form of polytheism, and a Satan's force of terror.

According to 'Imrān bin Huṣain (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) has said, (لَيْسَ مِنَ الْمُنْتَهَى أَنْ تَرَى أَوْ تَكُونَ أَوْ تُقْرَأَ لَهُ، أَوْ سُحْرٌ أَوْ شَحْرٌ لَهُ، وَمَنْ أَنْتَ كَاذِبٌ فَعَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَقُولُ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ).

"He is not of us<sup>(1)</sup>; who himself believes in evil omen or allows such to be introduced to him by another person; or who acts as a fortune-teller or has his own fortune told by another person; or employs magic or asks others to use it for him. And Whoever goes to a fortune-teller and believes in what he tells- then he has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad". (*Musnad al-Bazzār* vol ix, p.52 *hadīth* no. 3578<sup>(2)</sup>).

We beseech Allāh for an improvement in the [spiritual] conditions of the Muslims. May He bestow on them good understanding of their religion, and protect them from the deceit of criminals and collaborators of the devils.

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1- i.e. His practice is alien to ours as true believers in Allāh (ﷻ).

2- The narrators, according to al-Haithami, are men of the *sahīh hadīths*. (al-Haithami, *Majma' al-Zawāid* vol.v, p. 117).

## **Chapter Three: Oneness of Allāh Regarding His Names and Attributes (*Tawhīd al-Asmā' wa al-Sifāt*)**

**Preamble: The belief in Allah's Names and Attributes and its impact on the Muslim**

**3.1 Definition and proofs.**

**3.1.1 Definition.**

**3.1.2 The proper method of establishing this belief.**

**3.1.3 Proofs of this method.**

**3.2 Practical examples in the light of the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*.**

**3.3 Some principles regarding Allāh's Names and Attributes.**

## Preamble: The belief in Allāh's Names and Attributes and its impact on the Muslim

Believing in Allāh's Names and Attributes has enormous influence both on the soul of a Muslim as well as on his worship of the Lord (Allāh). The impact includes that feeling he has in the course of his engagement in heart-related devotion to Allāh, which makes him rely on Allāh and be mindful of his physical and mental actions. He will also gain control of his thoughts; and thus, think only of what pleases Allāh, and loves anyone or anything strictly for His sake alone. His hearing and sight will all be in accordance with Allāh's commandments, and yet, he will be full of hope for Allāh's Mercy and has a fair thought concerning Him.

All these and other concepts relating to the belief in the meanings of Allāh's Names and Attributes cause one to offer both noticeable and unnoticeable acts of worship to Allāh. Worshippers are, however, not the same in this regard<sup>(1)</sup>, and that is a favour of Allāh which He bestows on whoever He likes.

The great impact of Allāh's Name '*Al-Ghaffār*' (the Oft-forgiving) for instance, manifests in the love one has for Him, and the ceaseless hope he shows for His Mercy.

The impact of Allāh's Name '*Shadīd al-Iqāb*' (The One who is stern in punishment) is so enormous that one would fear Him and never dare to break His laws. Similarly, all other Names or Attributes

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I- That is in the intensity of each worshiper's devotion to his/her Lord. (Translator)

of Allāh, based on what each of them denotes, have impacts on the soul of a Muslim as well as on the level of his compliance with Allāh's law. That further gives rise to hearty love for Allāh; the basis of Muslim's happiness in this world and the world to come, the key to every success, and the most valuable assistance one could get regarding the worship of his Lord in the most accurate manner. The degree of such love for Allāh determines how easy or tedious the physical acts of worship become for a worshipper.

Perfecting an act of worship or improving it in accordance with the wish of Allāh depends on the hearty love one has for Him, which is also contingent on knowing Him by His Names and Attributes. No wonder the Messengers of Allāh worshiped Him most, since their love and knowledge of Him surpass those of any other human being.

### 3.1 Definition and proofs of the belief in Allāh's Names and Attributes

#### 3.1.1 Definition:

It is to believe in any name or attribute ascribed to Allāh, either by Himself or by His Messenger (ﷺ), and to absolve Him from such names or attributes which He or His Messenger has declared as not befitting Him (ﷺ). This also entails acknowledging the true meaning or indication of any divine Name or Attribute, as well as bearing in mind its impacts and implications on Allāh's creatures.

#### 3.1.2 The proper method of establishing this belief:

That is to believe absolutely and decisively in whatever term either Allāh or His Messenger has used to describe Him, with neither distortion, nor negation, nor subjecting such terms to descriptive designation (i.e. *takyīf*) or anthropomorphic explanation (i.e. *tamthīl*).

**Distortion** means alteration or misrepresentation of something, and it is done in two ways:

1- Literal or Physical distortion, by adding something to a word, deleting part of it, or changing a vowel sign in it. An example of this occurs in the following verse:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾

[Allāh] the Most Gracious rose over the Throne. (Tā-Hā; 5).

Some people distort the word '*istawā*' (He rose over...) in this verse to mean *istawlā* (He took possession of...).

The author of *al-Nūniyyah* [a well-known literary masterpiece] thus commented saying,

فَوْنَ الْيَهُودِ وَلَامَ جَهَنَّمَ فِي رَحْيِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ زَانَهَا

"The letter 'N' which the Jews inserted<sup>(1)</sup>, and the 'L'<sup>(2)</sup> being inserted by the Jahmites<sup>(3)</sup> are both additions to the revelation of the Lord of the Throne"

2- Abstract distortion, by twisting a word to mean something different from what Allāh and His Messenger intended by it. An instance of this is the interpretation by some, of "Hand" with respect to Allāh as either His Power or Blessing. Such a wrong interpretation, which conforms to neither religious nor linguistic rules.

**Negation or "Ta'til"** in Arabic is to deny Allāh's Attributes, such as a claim by some that He has no attributes at all. The difference between this and the earlier mentioned distortion lies in the fact that the latter involves substituting an incorrect meaning for the already misrepresented word, while denial of the intended or the correct meaning remains a common denominator in both.

**Takyif** means subjecting the Attributes of Allāh to human imagination in terms of how a certain quality of His could be. Some erring individuals or groups try to give descriptive explanation of Allāh's Attributes and thus claim that His Hand, or His being above the Throne is in this or in that manner etc. This, indeed, is an undue claim, for the state of Allāh's Attributes is known only to Him; it is beyond what a human being can comprehend.

1- Cf. commentaries on ayahs 58 and 59 from surat al- Baqarah. (Translator)

2- i.e. اسْتَوْلَى.

3- The Jahmites are those who deny Names or Attributes of Allāh (۴). (Translator)

**Tamthīl** is to compare Allāh (ﷻ) to His creatures, such as saying that He has hearing or face that are similar to ours. Far exalted is He above such a similitude.

The correct method applicable regarding Allāh's Names and Attributes has three fundamental rules, fulfillment of which is enough to guarantee safety from any deviation in this respect. These are:

1- Eliminating any anthropomorphic element in our conception of Allāh's Qualities. In other words, none of Allāh's Attributes should be likened to that of His creation.

2- Believing in any Name or Attribute ascribed to Allāh either by Himself or by His Messenger, in a manner that suits His Sublimity and Majesty.

3- To have no aspiration to comprehend the actual condition of Allāh's Attributes, as it is impossible for a created being to know this.

True implementation of those rules indicates genuine establishment of faith regarding the Names and Attributes of Almighty Allāh, and in line with the principles laid down by the worthy scholars of Islam.

### 3.1.3 Proofs of the Method:

The Qur'anic proofs in this regard, and precisely, as related to the first of the above mentioned rules include:

﴿لَمْ يَكُنْ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

"There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing". (al-Shūrā: 11).

This verse deplores resemblance of any kind between the Creator and what He has created, and yet ascribes hearing and sight to Him. The import therefore is that, although many creatures likewise possess the sense of hearing and the ability to see, in no circumstances could the Hearing or Sight of Almighty Allāh be similar to those of His creatures. This is also applicable to all other Attributes of Allāh (ﷻ). One may read, for instance, the following verse where Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿فَذَسِّعْ أَلَّهُ قَوْلَ أَلَّيْ خَدْرُكَ فِي دُرْجَهَا وَنَشَّيْ إِلَى أَلَّهُ وَاللهُ يَسْمَعُ مُحَاوِرَكَإِنَّ اللهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ﴾

Allāh has heard the speech of the one who argues<sup>(1)</sup> with you concerning her husband and directs her complaint to Allāh. And Allāh hears your dialogue; Indeed, Allāh hears and sees [all things]. (al-Mujādilah: 1).

In his commentary on this ayah, Ibn Kathīr mentioned a remark<sup>(2)</sup> made by ‘Āisha (رضي الله عنها) who had said, "Praise be to Allāh whose Hearing covers every voice. That woman [referred to in the ayah above] has spoken to the Prophet (ﷺ) while I was just in a corner of the house but could not hear their conversation. Yet Allāh (ﷻ) revealed a revelation which says, "Allāh has heard the speech of the one who argues with you concerning her husband ...<sup>(3)</sup>".

Another Qur’ānic proof in this regard is:

1- i.e. pleads.

2- As reported by both Bukhbāri (in the Book of *Tawḥīd* vol. xiii p. 372) and Ahmad (in *al-Musnad* vol. vi p. 46).

3- Ibn Kathīr, *al-Tafsīr* vol. viii p. 60.

﴿فَلَا تَنْصُرُوا بِهِ الْأَكْفَارَ﴾

**So do not coin similitudes for Allāh.** (al-Nāḥl: 74). Tabārī said, i.e. "Do not assert similarities to Allāh, nor set up equals for Him. Definitely, nothing is similar or identical to Him".

Allāh has also said,

﴿عَلَىٰ مَنْ تَعْمَلُ لَهُ سَبِيلًا﴾

**Do you know of any who is similar to Him?** (Maryam: 65).

That is to say, according to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), "Do you know of any co-equal or peer for the Lord"?

In another verse, Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُ كَفُورًا أَحَدٌ﴾

**And there is no any equivalent to Him.** (al-Ikhlāṣ: 4).

According to Tabārī, this verse means, "Nothing resembles Him, and neither Has he got an equivalent nor anything comparable to Him".

As for the proofs concerning the second rule, (i.e. Believing in any Name or Attribute ascribed to Allāh either by Himself or by His Messenger), Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سَنَةٌ وَلَا نُومٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْهُ إِلَّا بِأَذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَمَا خَلْفَهُنَّ وَلَا يُجْعَلُونَ يُسْئَلُونَ  
عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَمَعَ كُرْسِيِّهِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَعْوَدُهُ حِفْظَهَا وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ  
الْعَظِيمِ﴾

Allāh -there is no deity worthy of worship but He, the Ever-Living, Who sustains and protects all beings. Neither drowsiness overtakes him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows that

which is in front of them and that which is behind them, and they encompass nothing of His Knowledge except for what He wills. His *Kursi*<sup>(1)</sup> extends over the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great. (al-Baqarah: 255).

﴿ هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

He [Allāh] is the First and the Last, the Predominant and the Intimate, and He knows all things. (al-Hadid: 3).

﴿ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ الْحِلْمُ وَالشَّهَدَةُ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٧﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْقَدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَمِّسُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ شَهِدُونَ اللَّهُ عَمَّا يَتَكَبَّرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْحَقِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَكُلِّ الْأَسْمَاءِ الْخَيْرُ يُسَيِّعُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾

He is Allāh besides whom there is no deity worthy of worship, the One who Knows the invisible and the visible, and He is the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. He is Allāh besides whom there is no deity worthy of worship, the Sovereign, the Holy, Who is free from defects, the Keeper of Faith<sup>(2)</sup>, The Watcher over His creatures, the Almighty, the Compeller, the Supreme; glory be to Allāh [exalted is He] above what they associate [with Him]. He is Allāh, the Creator, the Originator, the Maker of all shapes, His are the best Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him, and He is the Almighty, the All-Wise. (al-Ishr: 22-24).

1- *Kursi* literally means chair. Allāh's *Kursi* is, however, different from His *'Arsh* (Throne). (Translator)

2- i.e. who confirms the missions of His Messengers, cf. *Tafsīr al-Sa'dy*. (Translator)

Proofs in this regard from the *Sunnah* include a narration by Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه)، as reported by Muslim in his *sahīh*<sup>(1)</sup>. He said, "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) used to command us to recite the following prayer whenever we are about to sleep:

(اللهم رب السماوات ورب الأرض ورب العرش العظيم. ربنا ورب كل شيء، فاتق  
الحب والبغى، و Merlin العوراة والإنجيل والقرآن، أعوذ بك من شر كل دابة أنت آخذ  
بناصيتها. اللهم أنت الأول فليس قبلك شيء، وأنت الآخر فليس بعده شيء، وأنت  
الظاهر فليس فوقك شيء، وأنت الباطن فليس دونك شيء، اقض عنا الذئب واغتننا من  
الفقر).

'O Allāh! The Lord of the heavens, the earth and the magnificent Throne. Our Lord and the Lord of all things; the Splitter of the grain of corn and the date stone; the Revealer of the Torah, the *Injīl* (Gospel) and the Criterion (i.e. the Qur'ān). I seek refuge in You from the evil of every living thing that You take hold of its forelock<sup>(2)</sup>. O Allāh! You are the First, nothing is before You; You are the Last, after You there is nothing; You are the Predominant, and nothing is above You; You are the Intimate, and nothing is closer than You. Remove for us the burden of debt and relieve us from want'." (*Muslim*: 2713). There are many other textual proofs in this regard.

Concerning the third rule (To have no Aspiration of comprehending the actual condition of Allāh's Attributes), the proofs include Almighty Allāh's saying:

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1- The *hadīth* compilations of both Bukhārī and Muslim are known as *sahīh*. (Translator)

2- i.e. You have perfect control over it. (Translator)

﴿ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِهِ عِلْمًا ﴾

**He [Allāh] knows all that is before them and all that is behind them, while they do not encompass Him in knowledge.** (Tâ-Hâ: 110).

A Muslim scholar has explained the meaning of this ayah by saying, "Human knowledge cannot envelop the Lord of the heavens and the earth; all sorts of comprehension regarding how exactly the Qualities of Allāh could be, should therefore be refuted".

Some other Qur'anic proofs in this respect include:

﴿ لَا تَرَكَهُ الْأَبْصَرُ وَهُوَ بِالْأَبْصَرِ رَءُوفٌ ﴾

**No vision perceives Him, but He perceives all vision.** (al-Anfâm: 103). Another scholar says in his remark on the meaning of this verse, "This shows how perfect is Allāh's Majesty, and that He is greater than all things. It further clarifies that, owing to the perfection of His Sublimity, He cannot be perceived in an encompassing manner. An encompassing perception of something is more than the mere seeing of that thing. Hence, Allāh shall be seen in the hereafter but not in an encompassing manner, just as one could know Him, but could never have a total knowledge of Him".

Every right-minded person should therefore realize that the extent the human intellect could go has a limit, just as one's hearing and seeing abilities are not unlimited. Caring to know whatever is beyond human comprehension, such as the actual condition of Allāh's Attributes, is like taking upon oneself the desire to see what is behind a wall or to hear voices coming from a very far distance, using one's natural faculties of hearing and sight.

### 3.2 Practical examples on the topic, in accordance with the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*

Proofs concerning Allāh's Names and Attributes either in the Glorious Book of Allāh or the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ) are enormous. These have also been expressed in a variety of ways and contexts, and indeed, many of His Names and Attributes are mentioned in both sources. Books and other academic works on this subject are also available; whatever we are going to mention in the following pages are, therefore, mere examples.

#### A: NAMES

Almighty Allāh's Names include '*Al-Hayy'* and '*Al-Qayyūm'*, (The Ever-Living and the One who sustains and protects all beings) and both have been mentioned in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh says,

﴿إِنَّ لِلّٰهِ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيْوُمُ﴾

Allāh -there is no deity worthy of worship but He, the Ever-Living, Who sustains and protects all beings. (al-Baqarah: 255).

As for evidence from the *Sunnah*, Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) narrated saying,

كما مع النبي ﷺ في حلقة ورجل قائم يصلي فلما رکع وسجد وتشهد ودعا فقال في دعائه:  
 اللهم إِنِّي أَسأَلُكَ بِأَنَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ بِدِينِ الْمَوَافِعِ وَالْأَرْضِ بِإِذْنِ الْجَنَاحِ  
 وَالْإِكْرَامِ يَا حَسِيْبَنَا يَا قَيْوَمَنَا (لقد دعا باسم الله الأعظم الذي إذا دعى به  
 أجاب وإذا سئل به أعطى).

"We were in a gathering with the Prophet (ﷺ), while a man was standing performing *salāh*. After the man had bowed, prostrated and recited the *Tashahhud*<sup>(1)</sup> he supplicated saying, "O Allāh! I beseech You in Your capacity as the One to whom praise is due. There is no deity worthy of worship except You, the Originator of the heavens and the earth. O [Allāh] the Mighty and Glorious. O [Allāh] the Ever-Living, the Sustainer and Protector of all beings". The Prophet (ﷺ) then remarked, "This man has invoked Allāh with the greatest of His Names. Whoever invokes Him using this Name, his supplication will be answered, and his request be granted". (*Hākim*, *al-Mustadrak*, *hadīth* no. 1856<sup>(2)</sup>).

Another name is *Al-Hamīd* (The Praiseworthy). Allāh says,

﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَنِّيْحَ حَمِيدٌ﴾

And know that Allāh is Rich (Free of need), Praiseworthy. (*al-Baqarah*: 267).

Similarly, the *hadīth* of *Tashahhud* as narrated by Ka'b bin 'Ujrah serves as another proof here. According to the narrator, the Prophet (ﷺ) has taught them to say,

1- *Tashahhud* is that special form of supplication, which one recites during prayer in a sitting position after every two units (*raka'ats*). (Translator)

2- A *sahīl hadīth* conforming to the Muslim's standard, said al-Ḥākim, al-Dhahabi also supported this view.

(اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما صليت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إلَكْ  
حُمَدٌ مُحِمدٌ...).

"O Allāh! May Your blessing be upon Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, as it had been on Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy, Glorious". (*Bukhārī*: 3370; *Muslim*: 406).

- *Al-Rahmān and Al-Rahīm*: (The Entirely Merciful and the Especially Merciful).

Allāh (ﷻ) says,

الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٦﴾ الْرَّحْمٰنُ الرَّجِيْمُ ﴿٧﴾

[All] praise is [due] to Allāh, Lord of all beings. The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. (*al-Fatiḥah*: 2,3).

It is also on record that on the Day of *Hudaibiyah*, when the reconciliation treaty between the Muslims and the Meccan polytheists was being worked out, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered his scribe to write "*Bismi Allāh al-Rahmān al-Rahīm*" (In the name of Allāh the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful)<sup>(1)</sup>.

- *Al-Ḥalīm* (The Most Forbearing):

Allāh says,

إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا عَفُورًا ﴿٤١﴾

Indeed, He [Allāh] is Most-Forbearing, Most-Forgiving. (*Fātir*: 41).

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I- Cf. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*: 2731.

As for proof from the *Sunnah*, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allāh's Messenger used to say each time he was distressed,

(لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْغَلِيمُ...).

**"There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh, the Most Great, Most Forbearing..."**. (*Bukhāri*: 6345; *Muslim*: 2730).

## B: ATTRIBUTES

Allāh's Attributes include:

### - Ability or omnipotence (*al-Qudrah*):

This is a personal (*dhāti*) Attribute of Allāh, firmly established in both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. A *dhāti* attribute is any inherent Quality of Allāh that is in no circumstances separable from Him. As for this Attribute "*al-Qudrah*", Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

**Indeed, Allāh is Able to do all things.** (*al-Baqarah*: 20).

Also in the *Sunnah*, a tradition has it that ‘Uthmān bin Abu al-‘Āṣ (رضي الله عنه) complained, to the Prophet, of a certain ache he had been suffering in his body since he embraced Islam. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to him:

(ضع يدك على الذي تالم من جسدي، وقل: بسم الله تعالى رقى سبع مرات: (أعوذ بعزتك وقدرتك من شر ما أجد وأحافر)).

**"Lay your hand on that part of your body where you feel pain and then say, 'In the name of Allāh' -three times-, 'I seek refuge in the might of Allāh and His Ability, from the evil of that which I am feeling and that which I am wary of' -seven times-".** (*Muslim*: 2202).

- Life (*al-Hayāh*):

Also a personal attribute and is derived from Allāh's Name 'Al-Hayy' which has been mentioned earlier together with its proofs.

- Knowledge (*al-Ilm*):

Knowledge is another personal attribute for Allāh duly confirmed in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Allāh says,

﴿لَا يُحِيطُونَ بِيَقْنَىٰ وَمِنْ عِلْمِهِۦ رَّبِّكُمْۚ﴾

**And they encompass nothing of His Knowledge.** (al-Baqarah: 255).

From the *Sunnah*, Jābir bin 'Abdullah (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to teach them to say as part of the supplication for *Istikhārah*<sup>(1)</sup>,

(اللهم إني أستخلك بعلماتك وأستقدرك بقدرتك...).

"O Allāh! I ask You to choose for me the best [in accordance] with Your Knowledge; and with Your Ability, I seek the capability [for such]". (Bukhārī: 6382).

- Will, volition, etc. (*al-Irādah*):

This is also one of Allāh's Attributes confirmed in both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh's Will is a *fi'līy* (act-related) attribute. In other words, it is counted among those attributes relating especially to His Volition and Ability. Thus, whether He exercises such Qualities or not at any given time or situation depends absolutely on His Will and Volition. Allāh says,

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I- i.e. the special supplication for seeking guidance from Allāh before making important decisions or when one is in perplexing situations. (Translator)

﴿فَمَنْ يُرِدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ صَدَرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدُ أَنْ يُضْلِلَهُ يَجْعَلُ صَدَرَهُ ضَيْقًا حَبَابًا كَمَا يَصْعَدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ﴾

So whoever it is Allāh's Will to guide He expands his breast to [contain] Islam, and whoever it is His Will to send astray He makes his breast tight and constricted, as if he were climbing into the sky. (*al-An'ām*: 125).

Similarly, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما), reported that he heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) saying,

(إِنَّمَا يُرِدُ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ عَذَابًا إِنَّمَا هُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا عَلَى أَعْمَافِهِمْ).

"If Allāh wants to punish a nation, the punishment falls on all its members (indiscriminately), then on the Day of Resurrection, each of them will be resurrected as per his/her deeds". (*Muslim*: 2879).

#### - Highness or Being above (*al-'Ulūm*)

This, as well, is a personal (*dhāti*) Attribute for Allāh, firmly established in both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh says,

﴿سَبِّحْ أَسْمَارِكَ الْأَعْلَى﴾

**Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High.** (*al-A'lā*: 1).

He has also described His angels in another verse saying,

﴿يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقَهُمْ﴾

**They fear their Lord above them.** (*al-Nahl*: 50).

A *hadīth* narrated by Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنهما), which we have quoted earlier in this book, also contains proof for this Attribute. The *hadīth* says,

(...) اللهم أنت الأول فليس قبلك شيء، وأنت الآخر فليس بعديك شيء، ورأيت الظاهر  
فليس فوقك شيء، وأنت الباطن فليس دونك شيء...).

"...O Allāh! You are the First, nothing is before You. You are the Last, after You there is nothing. You are the Predominant, and nothing is above You. You are the Intimate, and nothing is closer than You ...". (*Muslim*: 2713).

- His being over the Throne (*al-Istiwa'*):

Another act-related Attribute of Allāh, confirmed in the Glorious Book and the *Sunnah*. Allāh says,

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَىٰ عَرْشِ أَسْتَوْى﴾

[Allāh] the Most Merciful rose over the Throne. (*Tā-Hā*: 5).

According to Qatādah bin al-Nu'mān (رضي الله عنه)، Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) also said,

﴿لَا فِرَغَ لِلَّهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ إِسْتَوْى عَلَىٰ عَرْشِهِ﴾.

"When Allāh had finished creating His creatures He rose over His Throne". (Dhahabi, *al-'Uloom* *hadīth* no. 119<sup>(1)</sup>).

The word "*Istiwa'*" in the Arabic language means; being above, ascension, rising up and settlement. Allāh's *Istiwa'*, however, is strictly in a manner that befits His Majesty.

- Talk and Talking (*al-Kalām*):

Talking, with respect to Allāh, is a personal Attribute as far as the talking ability itself is concerned, but an act-related one with regard to each and every Word spoken by Him. Allāh (ﷻ) therefore, speaks audibly whenever and in whatever manner He likes. The proofs establishing this Quality for Allāh in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* include the following:

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I- The author, al-Dhahabi, said, "Its narrators are reliable", and the *hadīth* was also recorded by al-Khallāl in his book called '*al-Sunnah*'.

﴿وَكَلَمُ اللَّهِ مُوسَى تَكْتُلِيْمًا﴾

And to Mūsa (Moses) Allāh spoke directly. (al-Nisā': 164).

﴿وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ مُوسَى لِيَقُولَنَا وَكْلَمَةً رَبِّهِ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ﴾

And when Mūsa came at the time and place We have appointed, and his Lord [Allāh] spoke to him, he said, 'My Lord! Show me [Yourself] that I may look at You'. (al-A'raf: 143).

Abu Hurairah (رض) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said, (احض آدم وموسى فقال له موسى: يا آدم أنت أبونا خيرتنا وأخر جتنا من الجنة. قال له آدم: يا موسى اصطفاك الله بكلامه وخط لك التوراة بيده ...).

"Ādam and Mūsa engaged in a debate, and the latter said, 'O Ādam, you are our progenitor; you were the cause of our failure and our being driven out of Paradise'. Ādam also responded, 'O Mūsa, Allāh did select you to [receive the privilege of] being spoken to directly by Him, and He also wrote for you the Torah with His own Hand' ..." (Bukhāri: 6614; Muslim: 2652).

#### - Countenance or Face (*al-Wajhu*):

Allāh's Face is both personal as well as textual (*khabari*)<sup>(1)</sup> Attribute, duly confirmed in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh says,

﴿وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا أَتَيْكُمْ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ﴾

And you do not spend except seeking the Countenance of Allāh. (al-Baqarah: 272).

I- The *khabari* Attributes of Allāh are those that the Muslims rely solely on textual evidence from either the Qur'ān or the *Sunnah* for their confirmation or otherwise. Thus, we must believe in such Attributes as long as there is proof for them, even if we fail to find logical justification for them based on our limited human imagination. (Translator)

﴿وَبِقِيَّ وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْعَلْمَيْ وَالْإِكْرَام﴾

**And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honour.** (al-Rahmān: 27).

Jabir bin ‘Abdullah (رضي الله عنهما) narrated saying,

(لَا ترَأَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ ﴿قُلْ هُوَ الْفَارَدُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَعْصَمَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّنْ فَوْقِكُمْ﴾، قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: أَعُوذُ بِوْجُوهِكَ، قَالَ: ﴿أَوْ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ﴾، قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: أَعُوذُ بِوْجُوهِكَ، قَالَ: ﴿أَوْ يَلْتَسِكُمْ شَيْئًا﴾، قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: هَذَا أَبْرَزُ).

"At the revelation of this Qur'ānic verse 'Say, He is the [only One] who has power to send upon you punishment from above you', the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "I seek refuge in Your Face". Then Allāh said, 'Or from beneath your feet', and the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "I seek refuge in Your Face". Then Allāh said, "Or to cover you with confusion in party strife". [(al-An'ām: 65)] and the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "[Anyway,] this is less [severe]". (Bukhārī: 7406).

#### - The Two Hands (*al-Yadān*):

The two Hands for Allāh (ﷻ) are also personal-textual attributes, firmly established in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh says,

﴿بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوتَانِ يُغْنِي كُلَّ شَاءٍ﴾

**Rather, both His Hands are extended [in bounty]. He gives as He pleases.** (al-Mā'idah: 64).

﴿قَالَ إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا حَلَقَتْ يَدَيْهِ﴾

He (Allāh) said, 'O Iblīs [Satan]! What prevented you from prostrating before that which I have created with My both Hands'? (Sād: 75).

Proofs of this from the *Sunnah* include a *hadīth* transmitted by Muslim on the authority of Abū Mūsa al-Ash'arī (رضي الله عنه) who quoted Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسْطِعُ بِهِ بِاللَّيلِ لِتَعْوِبَ مَسْئِيَّ النَّهَارِ، وَيُسْطِعُ بِهِ بِالنَّهَارِ لِتَعْوِبَ مَسْئِيَّ اللَّيلِ حَتَّىٰ تَطْلُعَ الشَّمْسُ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا).

Allāh stretches out His Hand during the night, so that people may repent for their shortcomings committed during the day. He also stretches out His Hand during the day, so that sinners may repent for the sins committed during the night. Until the sun rises in the west<sup>(1)</sup>. (*Muslim*: 2759).

#### - The Two Eyes (*al-'Aynān*):

Allāh's two Eyes as confirmed in both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, also constitute some of His personal-textual Attributes. Allāh says,

﴿وَأَصْنَعْ عَلَىٰ عَيْنِي﴾

**In order that you [Mūsa] may be brought up under My Eye.** (*Tā-Hā*: 39).

He also said to His other Prophet, Nūh (عليه السلام):

﴿وَأَصْنَعْ لِلْفَلَكَ بِأَعْيُنِي﴾

**And construct the ship under Our Eyes.** (*Hūd*: 37).

As for proofs from the *Sunnah*, a *hadīth* narrated by 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) has it that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

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I- The rising of the sun in the west is a major portent of the Day of Resurrection.  
(Translator)

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفِي عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَسْبَعْ رَأْسَكُمْ وَأَشَارَ بِيَدِهِ إِلَى عَيْنِيهِ، وَإِنَّ الْمَسِيحَ الدَّجَالَ أَعْوَرَ الْعَيْنَ الْيَمِنِيَّ كَانَ عَيْنَهُ عَيْنَةً طَافِيَّةً).

"**You are well aware of [the Qualities of] Allāh. Indeed, Allāh is not one-eyed** -the Prophet pointed to his own eyes [and then said]-**The *Masīh Dajjāl* (Antichrist) is deprived of his right eye; his eye looking like a protruding berry of grapes".** (*Bukhārī*: 7407; *Muslim*: 2933).

#### - Foot (*Al-Qadam*):

Here is another personal (*dhāti*) Attribute of Allāh, in accordance with proofs from the traditions of the Prophet (ﷺ). In one of those *hadīths* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رض), the Prophet (ﷺ) said while speaking of an argument between Paradise and Hellfire,

(... فَأَمَّا النَّارُ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ حَقَّ يَصْبَحُ أَنْ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعْلَمَ رَجْلَهُ تَقُولُ قَطْ قَطْ قَطْ فَهَذَاكَ قَطْلُنِي وَيَرْوِي بِعْضَهَا إِلَى بَعْضِ ...).

"**As for the Fire, it will not be filled up until Allāh puts His Leg.** Then the Fire will say, 'enough, enough, enough' and at that moment it will become filled; with its different parts coming closer to each other". (*Bukhārī*: 4850; *Muslim*: 2846).

In some other versions of the same *hadīth* which are also recorded in the books of *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, the wording goes thus,

(يَصْبَحُ قَدْمَهُ عَلَيْهَا ...).

"**At that point, Allāh will put His Foot over it [Fire]".** (*Bukhārī*: 4848, 4849; *Muslim*: 2848).

Names and Attributes of Allāh as mentioned in the Glorious Book and the *Sunnah* are innumerable; the above mentioned ones are, therefore,

mere examples. Generally, every Muslim should see those Names and Attributes as belonging to Allāh in a manner that suits His Majesty and Perfection, and state them as exactly as either Allāh or His Messenger (ﷺ) has done in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. It is indisputable that Allāh knows about Himself more than any of His creation would know. Similarly, the knowledge of His Messenger (ﷺ) in this respect surpasses that of any other creature. The Messenger (ﷺ) is also the most sincere mentor, and the most fluent, eloquent and God-fearing person. Care must therefore be taken to avoid either denial of Allāh's Attributes or comparing them to those of His creation, for **Nothing is like Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.** (al-Shūra: 11).

﴿لَمْ يَكُنْ كَوْثِيرٌ شَفِقٌ، وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

### **3.3 Some principles regarding Almighty Allāh's Names and Attributes**

#### **a) Having a consistent approach to Allāh's Attributes and His Self or Essence**

By this, we mean that Allāh is comparable to nothing in His Self, Attributes and Acts. Furthermore, since Allāh's Self is undoubtedly real and unique, His Attributes, as confirmed in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, must equally be real and incomparable to any other attributes. Hence, our approach to both issues must be one and consistent.

As Allāh's Self has never and is not being disputed by any Muslim, this principle becomes strong evidence against anyone who denies Allāh's Attributes in spite of believing in His Self. If anyone should argue that he is rejecting those attributes with a view to avoid comparing Allāh to His creatures, then the counterargument to that is to say, 'Why then have you ascribed to Allāh a real self, while you also attribute selves to His creatures; doesn't that amount to comparison, based on your initial deduction'? However, if he claims -and certainly he would- that the self he ascribes to Allāh is quite different from those of His creatures, then we ask him to apply this on His Qualities as well. Allāh's Self is indeed incomparable to any other one, but, similarly, His Attributes must also follow suit. Furthermore, if the contender should exclaim that how can he believe in an Attribute of Allāh when the actual description of such is unknown to him? The answer is to say, 'All you need to do here is the same as what you have done regarding His Self, in which you also believe, even though you do not know how exactly it is'.

**b) Whatever is said regarding a particular Attribute must also be maintained with respect to the rest**

This also means being consistent in what one says concerning each of Allāh's Attributes, in terms of affirmation or denial. This principle deals particularly with that group of people who believe in some of Allāh's Attributes but disbelieve in others. If anyone believes in some of Allāh's Attributes such as Life, Knowledge, Ability, Hearing, Sight, etc., but raises objection to other Qualities of His, such as Love, Satisfaction, Anger, etc., claiming that these -unlike the ones he believes in- are mere metaphorical terms. To such a person we should say, "These Attributes all belong to Allāh, and there is no basis for treating part of them differently". As you would ascribe to Allāh certain attributes such as life, knowledge, ability, hearing and sight without comparing them to similar qualities possessed by His creatures, you should also believe in the Love [for righteous acts for instance], Satisfaction and Anger which He has attributed to Himself without subjecting them to anthropomorphic explanation, or else you would be contradicting yourself.

**c) Allāh's Names and Attributes are text-based**

Textual evidence from the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, rather than reasoning, are the only source for knowing Allāh's Names and Attributes. Addition or omission of any Name or Attribute is, therefore, unacceptable, for the human reasoning cannot know on its own what the Almighty Allāh deserves in this respect. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿وَلَا تَنْهَىٰ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَشْرُولاً﴾

And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Surely, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all of those [you] will be questioned. (*al-Isrā'*: 36). This has always been the method of the leading scholars of Islam. Imam Ahmad (رضي الله عنه) said, "In no other way should Allāh be described other than the way He or His Messenger have described Him. The limits set by both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* should not be exceeded".

In his contribution, another scholar reasoned that knowing something and subsequently being able to describe it is possible through any of the following three ways: Having seen the object itself, or its like, or through a description of it made by one who knows it. The source of our knowledge concerning Allāh (عز وجل)، His Names and Attributes is confined to the third way, viz. the information we may have from someone who knows Him. No doubt, Allāh's Knowledge in this regard comes first, followed by that of His Messengers to whom He has revealed and taught His messages. It is therefore inevitable to stick to the divine revelation in knowing what is, and what is not a name or attribute of Almighty Allāh. After all, we have never seen Him in this world so that we could describe Him, neither is there something identical to Him that we may use its qualities to describe Him. Exalted and Holy is our Lord.

#### d) Allāh's Names are all the most beautiful

Allāh's Names are at the peak of every beauty. He says,

﴿وَلِلّٰهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى﴾

**And to Allāh belong the most beautiful [or best] Names.** (al-A'raf: 180). This is so, because the bearer is Allāh (ﷻ), owner of the best and most honourable designation, while the Names themselves contain perfect Qualities that are totally free from defect in whatever sense.

The name '*al-Hayy*' (The Living) for instance, denotes a perfect and permanent life with neither a beginning nor an end; a life that presupposes many other attributes of perfection, including knowledge, ability, hearing, sight, etc.

The name *al-'Alim* (The Knowing) on the other hand, implies an impeccable Knowledge, free from any previous ignorance or subsequent forgetfulness. Allāh says,

﴿عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّ فِي كِتَابٍ لَا يَضِلُّ رَبِّ وَلَا يَنْسَى﴾

**He [Mūsa] said, 'The knowledge thereof is with my Lord [kept] in a record. My Lord [Allāh] neither errs nor forgets'.** (Tā-Hā: 52).

Such an extensive supernatural Knowledge that encompasses all things both in summary and in detail, whether they relate to Allāh's deeds or to those of His creation. He says,

﴿يَعْلَمُ حَالَةَ الْأَعْمَى وَمَا تَعْفِفُ الصُّدُورُ﴾

**He (Allāh) knows the deception of the eyes and what the breasts conceal.** (Ghāfir: 19).

The beauty in Allāh's Names manifests itself in two ways; a single name may alone reveal this beauty, or when such a name forms with another one a befitting beautiful combination, and thus adding excellence to an already existing perfection.

For example, Allāh often conjoins the names '*al-‘Azīz*' (The Almighty) and '*al-Hakīm*' (The All-Wise) to describe Himself in the Glorious Qur'ān. Each of the two names denotes, separately, the perfect quality it naturally entails, which is might in the former, as well as wisdom and judicious decision in the latter. The combination of both names, yet indicates an additional excellent quality, as it reveals that Allāh's Might is never dissociated from wisdom. Hence, His Might brings about neither injustice nor oppression, unlike some of His creatures, who are also mighty in the human concept, but may be led to sin by arrogance, and thus become unfair in their dealings. Similarly, Allāh's Wisdom and Judgment are always characterized by His perfect Might, in contrast to prudence or judgment of any created being, which are not permanently free from inferiority. Allāh knows best.

At the close of this chapter, we would like to mention some of the benefits that a Muslim may reap through adherence to this important principle; believing in the one and only God (Allāh) and abstaining from associating partners with Him, whether in His Lordship, Divinity, Names or Attributes.

- 1- A believing servant of Allāh gains the bliss of this life and the life to come. Rather, Faith itself is the pre-requisite for achieving felicity in both; hence, the level of one's belief in his Lord, His Names and Attributes determines his portion of such felicity.

2- The most important factor of one's fear of Allāh and his obedience to Him is that belief he has in Him, His Names and His Attributes. The more a person grows in his knowledge of Allāh the nearer he comes in his approach to Him. He would similarly be more pious, devote more time and energy for the worship of his Lord, and be at farther distance from committing sins or violating His rules.

3- Another ripe fruit of this faith is the tranquillity, repose, security and guidance, which the believer enjoys both in this life and in the hereafter. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُ قُلُوبُهُمْ يَذْكُرُ اللَّهُ أَلَا يَرْجُوكُمْ أَنْتُمْ لَنُورٌ﴾

Those who have believed, and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allāh. Truly, in the remembrance of Allāh do hearts find rest. (al-Ra'd: 28).

4- The reward of the hereafter is attainable only for people with sound faith. Anyone who believes in Allāh and has fulfilled the conditions of this belief, will be rewarded in the hereafter and be admitted into Paradise, the width whereof is as the width of the heaven and the earth. The bliss of Paradise is such that no eye or ear has either seen or heard of its like, and neither has its picture come to a human mind. The believer will also be saved from Fire and its devastating punishment, and, above all, gain an everlasting pleasure of his Lord. Moreover, on the Day of Resurrection, he will enjoy looking at the noble Face of Almighty Allāh in neither distress nor trying ordeal.

5- The belief in Allāh rectifies our deeds and makes them acceptable to Him. Without Faith, all acts, no matter how various or numerous, are not acceptable to Allāh, and shall be rejected. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿وَمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَيَطَ عَنْهُ دُرُّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

**And whoever denies the faith- his work has become worthless, and he will be among the losers in the hereafter.** (al-Mā'ida: 5).

﴿وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَى لِلْأَنْجَانَ بِسَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مِنْ أَنْوَارِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُ مُشْكُرًا ﴾

**But whoever desires the [reward of the] hereafter and strives for it with necessary effort, while being a believer; for such their effort finds favour [with Allāh].** (al-Isrā': 19).

6- Sound belief in Allāh brings about compliance with the truth, both in theory and practice. It also prepares the believer to accept useful admonitions and effective lessons. In addition, faultless disposition, good intention, initiatives for the performance of good deeds, shunning forbidden and abominable actions, as well as sticking to commendable behaviour, noble habits and useful morals are also benefits of having sound Faith.

7- Believers find in their faith a safe haven from what befalls them of civil and sorrow, safety and danger, obedience and insurrection, or any other form of the inevitable. In the days of happiness and contentment they resort to their belief in Allāh, praising and extolling Him, while they also utilize the blessing He has bestowed on them in a manner that pleases Him. During hard times and in the case of any misfortune, they also have recourse to their faith, and console

themselves with it and the reward that usually comes in the aftermath. They also return to their faith whenever in fear or sorrow, and their hearts are thus reposed, their faith increases, and their reliance on Allāh becomes greater.

Equally, their belief in Allāh serves as a retreat for them even as they do pious acts and are being guided by Allāh to such. They, therefore, acknowledge His favour on them, aspire to complete the acts, and beseech Allāh to grant them steadiness and persistence in performing the same and make them acceptable to Him. They equally resort to their faith in Allāh when they commit any sin, and quickly repent and get themselves purified of whatever evil or taint involved. Thus, we see that true believers resort to their belief in the one and only God (Allāh) in all their actions and conditions.

8- Knowing Allāh through His Names and Attributes culminates in developing hearty love for Him. The reason is that Allāh's Names and Attributes are absolutely perfect, while perfection and excellence are naturally beloved to the human mind. When the heart is full of love for Allāh (ﷻ), the limbs will be readily prepared to embark on pious acts, and the wisdom behind the creation- which is to worship Allāh alone, thus becomes a reality.

9- Understanding the Names and Attributes of Allāh paves the way for a strong belief in Him as the only God who controls the affairs of the creation. This will also result in sincere reliance on Him in the course of striving for worldly or religious benefits. And in that lie

man's success and prosperity, for whoever puts his trust in Allāh, He will be sufficient for Him.

10- The *Ihsā'*<sup>(1)</sup> of Allāh's Names and the knowledge thereof are the gateway to all other aspects of knowledge. Usually, the field of any knowledge is either a creation of Allāh and His commandment, or something He has made or prescribed. Allāh's commandment and creation stem from His most beautiful Names, and are so co-related that one is a requisite for the other. Whoever accomplished the *ihsā'* of Allāh's Names in the best humanly possible way, has, therefore, mastered all branches of knowledge.

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1- The word *ihsā'* literally means counting and memorization of something. But whenever used in relation to Allah's Names, it further involves believing in those Names or Attributes, and acting in line with their connotations. (Translator)

## **SECTION TWO: OTHER ARTICLES OF FAITH**

### **Chapter 1: The Belief in Angels**

**1.1 The identity, origin, qualities and some of the characteristics of the angels.**

**1.2 The importance of believing in the angels, the nature of this belief and its proofs.**

**1.3 Functions of the angels.**

## 1.1 The identity, origin, qualities and some of the characteristics of the angels

The word '*malāikah*' (i.e. angels) in the Arabic language is the plural form of '*malak*'; a derivative of the word '*a'lūk*' meaning 'message'.

Angels are Allāh's creatures who have luminous and soft bodies, and are capable of assuming many honourable shapes. They also possess outstanding power and exceptional ability to move from one place to another. There are many angels in existence, but their exact number is known only to Allāh, Who has chosen them to worship Him and keep to His commandments. Hence, the angels never refuse to execute any order from Him, and they do precisely whatever they are commanded to do.

### The origin of the angels' creation

Allāh created the angels from light. A narration by 'Āisha (رضي الله عنها) quoted the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) as saying, (خلفت الملائكة من نورٍ، وخلقني الجنّ من نارٍ، وخلق آدم مما وصف لكم). "The angels were created from light; the *jinn* from fierce flame of fire; and Ādam from that which has been described for you<sup>(1)</sup>". (*Muslim*: 2996).

### Their qualities

There are texts in both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* describing attributes of the angels as well as the essence of those attributes.

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1- i.e. in the Qur'ān. Cf. al-Sajdah: 7; Sād: 71. (Translator)

In some places, the angels are described as being powerful and stern. Allāh says,

﴿إِنَّمَا يَنْهَا الَّذِينَ مَا سُنُّوا فَوْرَأَنُّوْا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَغْلَبُكُمْ نَارًا وَقُوَّدُهَا أَنَامُشٌ وَالْجَهَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غَلَاظٌ شَدَادٌ﴾

**O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is people and stones. Over which are [appointed] angels, who are harsh and severe.** (al-Tahrim: 6).

Allāh described Jibrīl (ﷺ) (Archangel Gabriel) in some other verses as follows:

﴿عَلَيْهِ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَّى﴾

**He [the Prophet] has been taught [this Qur'ān] by one who is intense in strength.** (al-Najm: 5).

﴿ذِي فُورٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْمَرْسَى مَكِينٌ﴾

**Possessed of power and, with [Allāh] the Owner of the Throne, highly ranked.** (al-Takwīr: 20).

The magnitude of the angels' physical sizes and creation is another quality, which has been used to describe them. According to Muslim, who in turn narrated this on the authority of 'Āisha (رضي الله عنها), that she asked Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) concerning the meaning of the following Qur'ānic verse:

﴿وَلَمَّا رَأَى أَلْأَقْلَمَ لِلَّهِ﴾

**And he [Muhammad] has already seen him [Jibrīl] in the clear horizon.** (al-Takwīr: 23). The Prophet (ﷺ) replied,

(إنما هو جبريل لم أره على صورته التي خلق عليها غير هاتين المرتين رأيه منهبطاً من السماء  
سادساً عظيم خلقه ما بين السماء (إلى الأرض).

"That was Jibril (Gabriel) who I have not seen in his natural angelic form except on these two occasions. I saw him descending from the heavens with the magnitude of his physical appearance covering the distance between the heavens and the earth". (*Muslim*: 177).

In another narration by Imam Ahmad, Ibn Mas'ud (رضي الله عنه) said,  
(رأى رسول الله ﷺ جبريل في صورته، وله سبعمائة جناح، كل جناح منها قد سد الأفق  
يسقط من جناحه من التهاريل والدر والياقوت ما أله به عليم).

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) saw Angel Jibril in his original angelic form. He has six hundred wings, each of which blocked up the horizon. Many pearls, rubies and other objects of different colours, the exact number of which is known to Allāh, were falling off the wings". (*Musnad Ahmad* vol.i, p. 395 and vi, p. 294<sup>(1)</sup>).

Also, according to Jābir bin 'Abdullah (رضي الله عنهما), and as reported by Abu Dawūd, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,  
(أذن لي أن أحدث عن ملك من ملائكة الله من حلة العرش إنَّ ما بين شحمة أذنه وعاتقه  
مسيرة سبعمائة عام).

"I have been authorised to speak of an angel of Allāh among the bearers of His Throne; the distance between his earlobe and his shoulder is equivalent to a seven hundred year walk". (*Sunan Abu Dawūd* vol. v p. 96 *hadīth* no 4727<sup>(2)</sup>).

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1- The *Isnād* (chain of transmission) for this *hadīth* is 'good', said al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Kathir.

2- According to Haithami in his *Majmū'a al-Zawāid*, the narrators are known for having transmitted many other sound *hadīths*.

Another feature of the angels is the difference in degrees of their physical composition. There are angels with just two wings, others with three, or four, while there are some with up to six hundred wings. Allāh (ﷻ) says in the Glorious Qur'ān,

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰالَمٰنِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْكَوْكَبَ كَفَهُ رَسُلًا أُنْوَنٰتِ أَجْمَعَةٍ مَّنْتَقٰ وَثَلَاثٰ  
وَرَبْعٌ بَزِيدٌ فِي الْخَلٰقِ مَا يَشَاءُ﴾

"Praise be to Allāh the Originator of the heavens and the earth, who made the angels messengers with wings; two or three or four. He increases in creation what He will". (Fātir: 1).

Attractiveness and handsomeness are also distinctive features of the angels, whose standard in this respect is of towering height. Allāh (ﷻ) described Angel Jibrīl saying,

﴿عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ ذُرْ مَرْقَ فَأَسْتَوَىٰ﴾

"He [the Prophet] has been taught [this Qur'ān] by one who is intense in strength. Free from any defect in body and in mind. He [Jibrīl] rose and became stable [in his true angelic form]". (al-Najm: 5, 6).

The original word in the above verse "ذُرْ مَرْق" has been explained as 'one with attractive outward appearance' and as 'one with handsome tall shape' by Ibn 'Abbās and Qatādah respectively.

The Qur'ānic account concerning the reaction of the historical Egyptian women at the sight of Prophet Yūsuf (ﷺ) reads as follows:

﴿فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُ أَكْبَرْنَهُ وَقَطَعْنَ أَيْرَاهُنَّ وَقَلَنْ حَسْنَ لِلّٰهِ مَا هَذَا بَشَرٌ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ﴾

And when they saw him they exalted him [admired his attractiveness], cut their hands [distractedly] and said, 'God

forbid! This is not a human being; this is but a noble angel! (Yūsuf: 31).

Had it not been an incontrovertible fact from the human perspective that angels are usually described with dazzling attractiveness, those women would not have made such a remark.

Furthermore, Allāh described the angels as being honourable and righteous. He says,

﴿إِنَّمَا يُبَاهِدُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَرَوْهُ﴾  
15

In the hands of scribes [i.e. angels]; honourable, righteous. ('Abasa: 15, 16).

﴿وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ حِفْظَةً ۚ كَرَامًا كَثِيرَةً﴾

But indeed, over you are [angels appointed as] keepers. Honourable, writing down [your deeds]. (al-Insīrāt: 10, 11).

Modesty is another quality of the angels. The Prophet (ﷺ) has said of his companion, 'Uthmān (رضي الله عنه)،

(أَلَا أَسْتَحِي مِنْ رَجُلٍ نَسْتَحِي مِنْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ).

"Wouldn't I be bashful in the presence of a man, before whom the angels are bashful"? (*Muslim*: 2401).

The angels are also described as being knowledgeable. Allāh once addressed them in the following way,

﴿إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

Indeed, I know that which you do not know. (al-Baqarah: 30).

Thus, Allāh states that the angels also have knowledge in certain area, even as He ascribes to Himself knowledge of other things, of which the angels are ignorant. He has also said concerning Angel Jibril (ﷺ),

عَلَّمَهُ شَرِيدُ الْقُوَى

One [i.e. Gabriel] who is intense in strength taught him [this Qur'ān]. (al-Najm: 5).

This verse means, according to Ṭabari, that 'Ibrīl' taught the Prophet (ﷺ) this Qur'ān. Angel Ibrīl has therefore been described as not only a scholar, but also as a teacher.

There are still many other great qualities and noble characters of the angels mentioned in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, showing how important and highly esteemed they are. May the peace of Allāh be upon them.

### The characteristics of the angels

Allāh (ﷻ) has endowed the angels with certain features and qualities, which neither human beings nor *jinn* or any other creatures share with them.

One of those distinctive features is that they live in the heavens, and only come to the earth occasionally to carry out Allāh's orders regarding His creatures and their affairs. Allāh says,

﴿بِرَزَلَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ يَأْرُجُونَ أَمْرَهُ، عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ بِهِمْ أَعْلَمُ﴾

**He sends down the angels with the *rāhī* (revelation) of His command to whom He wills of His servants.** (al-Nahl: 2).

﴿وَرَأَيَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ حَافِرِتِينَ مِنْ حَوْلِ الْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ﴾

**And you will see the angels surrounding the Throne on all sides, glorifying the praise of their Lord.** (al-Zumar: 75).

In accordance with a narration by Abū Hurairah (رض), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(يَعَافِيُونَ لِيَكُمْ مَلَائِكَةُ اللَّيلِ، وَمَلَائِكَةُ النَّهَارِ، وَيَجْمِعُونَ فِي صَلَاةِ الصَّبَحِ وَصَلَاةِ الظَّهِيرَةِ، ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ الَّذِينَ يَاتُوا لِيَكُمْ لِيَسْأَلُوكُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ كَيْفَ تَرَكْتُمْ عِبَادِي؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: قَرَّكَاهُمْ وَهُمْ يَصْلُونَ، وَأَتَيْنَاهُمْ وَهُمْ يَصْلُونَ).

A group of angels stay with you at night and another group stay by daytime. The two groups gather at the time of Dawn (*Fajr*) and Afternoon (*'Asr*) prayers. Those angels who have been with you overnight ascend [to Heaven] where Allāh, even though He knows more about them, will ask the angels, 'In what state have you left my servants'? They reply, 'We left them as they were performing *salāh* (prayer), just as we had also met them praying'. (*Bukhāri*: 555; *Muslim*: 632). The proofs concerning this issue are too many to be mentioned here.

Angels should not be described as females; contrary claims by the unbelievers have been clearly refuted in the following verses:

﴿ وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِنَ إِنَّا أَشَهَدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ شَهَدُوهُمْ وَرَسَّاعُونَ ﴾

**And they make the angels, who themselves are servants of [Allāh] the Most Merciful, females. Did they witness their creation? Their testimony will be recorded and they will be called to account.** (al-Zukhruf: 19).

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيَسْمُونَ الْمَلائِكَةَ نَسَاءَ الْأَنْثَى ﴾

**Indeed, those who do not believe in the hereafter name the angels with the names of females.** (al-Najm: 27).

Another distinguishing quality of the angels is their absolute obedience to all of Allāh's commandments. In addition, the angels have no tendency for sinful acts, but, on the contrary, have natural propensity for compliance with Allāh's commands. He says,

﴿ لَا يَعْصُوْنَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمْرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

**They [the angels] resist not any command from Allāh, but do that which they are ordered.** (al-Tahrim: 6).

﴿ لَا يَسْتَأْتِفُونَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

**They speak not until He has spoken, and by His Command they act.** (al-Anbiyā': 27).

Also, the angels are never bored with, or weary of engaging in acts of worship. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

وَمِنْ عِنْدِهِ لَا يَسْتَحْكِرُونَ عَنِ عِبَادَتِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَخِسِرُونَ ۝ بُشِّرُونَ أَيْلَلَ وَالنَّهَارَ  
لَا يَقْنُونَ ۝

And those who are near Him [Allāh]<sup>(1)</sup> are neither too proud to worship Him, nor are they weary [of His worship]. They glorify [Him] day and night, [and] they flag not. (al-Anbiyā': 19,20).

فَإِنْ أَسْتَحْكِرُوا فَالَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ يُسَبِّحُونَ لَهُ بِأَيْلَلٍ وَالنَّهَارِ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ۝

But if they [the polytheists] are arrogant, still, those who are near your Lord glorify Him by night and by day, and they do not become weary. (Fussilat: 38).

Those are some of the qualities Allāh has given His angels, but not to humankind and *jinn*. Generally, the angels are entirely another creation, different from both humankind and *jinn* in their origin and physical composition. Humankind and *jinn* are similarly endowed with certain features, which also make them different from one another. Allāh knows best.

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I- i.e. the angels. (Translator)

## 1.2 The importance of believing in the angels, the nature of this belief and its proofs

### a) The importance of believing in the angels

The belief in angels constitutes in Islam a pillar of Faith and a major prerequisite for it. This has been clearly stated in the Qur'an as well as in the *Sunnah*. Allāh says,

﴿ إِنَّمَا مَنْ أَمَنَ بِرَبِّهِ وَالْمَوْلَى مَنْ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُقْرَبُونَ كُلُّهُمْ يَأْمُنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَكِيَّتِهِ وَكُلُّهُمْ يَرْسُلُونَ ﴾

**The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. Each of them has believed in Allāh, His angels, His Books and His Messengers...** (al-Baqarah: 285).

This is a declaration by Allāh (ﷻ) that the belief in angels, as well as other articles of Faith, is part and parcel of His revelation to the Messenger (ﷺ). That He has also enjoined this on him and on his followers, and that they have all adhered to it.

Allāh says also in another verse,

﴿ لَئِنْ أَرَيْتَ أَنْ تُولِّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ فَقِيلَ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ وَلَكُلِّ أَلْهَمٍ مِنْ مَنْ يَأْمُنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْآخِرَةِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةَ وَالْكِتَابَ وَالثَّيْمَنَ ﴾

**Righteousness is not that you [merely] turn your faces toward the east or the west, but righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allāh, the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the Prophets...** (al-Baqarah: 177).

According to this verse, Allāh has made one's belief in the mentioned items a mark of righteousness, which comprises of all meritorious acts. The reason being that those items are the basis of all

pious acts, in addition to being the pillars of Faith, from which all other branches emanate.

On the other hand, Allāh informed us that disbelieving in those pillars of Faith is equivalent to disbelieving even in Him. He says,

﴿وَمَن يَكْفُرُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾  
And whoever disbelieves in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day has truly gone far astray. (al-Nisā': 136).

Allāh has thus designated whoever denies the pillars of Faith as an unbeliever and described him as having wandered far astray. It is therefore bespoken that believing in the angels constitutes a major pillar of Faith, while neglecting it nullifies the creed of a Muslim entirely.

The *Sunnah* as well contains some proofs on this point, as clearly stated in the *hadīth* known as the *hadīth* of Jibrīl. The *hadīth*, as related by Muslim, quotes 'Umar bin al-Khattāb (رضي الله عنه) as saying,

(بِمَا نَحْنُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ ذَاتِ يَوْمٍ إِذْ خَلَعَ عَلَيْنَا رَجُلٌ شَدِيدٌ بِيَاضِ الثِّيَابِ، ثَدِيدٌ سُوَادُ الشَّعْرِ، لَا يَرَى عَلَيْهِ أثْرَ السَّفَرِ، وَلَا يَعْرَفُهُ مَنْ أَحَدٌ، حَتَّى جَلَسَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ ﷺ، فَلَمْ يَنْدِدْ رَكْبَيْهِ إِلَى رَكْبَيْهِ، وَوَضَعَ كَفَّيهِ عَلَى فَخْدَيْهِ، وَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدًا! أَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: الْإِسْلَامُ أَنْ تَشْهِدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ، وَتَقْرِيمُ الصَّلَاةِ، وَتَنْوِيُ الزَّكَاةِ وَتَصْرُومُ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحْجُجُ الْبَيْتِ إِنْ أَسْطَعْتَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا. قَالَ: صَدِقْتَ، قَالَ: فَعَجَبْنَا لَهُ، يَسَّالُهُ وَيَصْدِقُهُ. قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الإِيمَانِ؟ قَالَ: أَنْ تَوْمَنْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَكِتَبِهِ، وَرَسُولِهِ، وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتَوْمَنْ بِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِهِ. قَالَ: صَدِقْتَ، قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِحْسَانِ، قَالَ: أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَائِنَكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكُ، قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ السَّاعَةِ؟ قَالَ: مَا الْمَسْؤُلُ عَنْهَا بِأَعْلَمِ مِنِ السَّاجِلِ، قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ اهْمَارِهَا؟ قَالَ: أَنْ تَلْدِي الْأَمَةَ رَيْهَا، وَأَنْ تَرَى الْحَفَّةَ الْعَرَاقَ، الْعَالَةَ، رِعَاءَ الشَّاءِ، يَعْتَازُونَ فِي الْبَيَانِ، قَالَ: ثُمَّ

انطلق فلبيت ملبيا ثم قال لي: يا عمر! ألهري من السائل؟ قلت: الله ورسوله أعلم. قال:  
فإنك جبريل، أناكم يعلمكم دينكم

One day, we were with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) when a purely white dressed man, with exceptionally black hair appeared before us. No signs of travel could be seen on him, and yet none of us knew him. He eventually sat with the Prophet (ﷺ) and placed his knees close to his knees, while resting his palms over his own thighs. He then said, '**O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam'**. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said, '**Islam is to testify that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allāh, and that Muhammad is His Messenger; to perform Salāh; to pay the obligatory charity (Zakāh); to fast in the month of Ramadān and to perform Hajj to the sacred House [in Makkah], provided that you are able to do so**'. He [the questioner] remarked, '**You have spoken the truth**'. We were amazed to see him playing the roles of a questioner and a verifier simultaneously. He then said, '**Tell me about Faith**'. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said, '**That you believe in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and in predestination; whether auspicious or inauspicious**'. He remarked again saying, '**You have told the truth**', and said further, '**Inform me about al-Ihsān<sup>(1)</sup>**'. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, '**To worship Allāh as if you are seeing Him, for although you do not, but He certainly sees you**'. The questioner said, '**Tell me about the Hour<sup>(2)</sup>**', and the Prophet's response was, '**Who is being asked this question**

1- That is outstanding performance of acts of worship. (Translator)

2- i.e. the last day of the world. (Translator)

**does not know more than the questioner himself.** Then he said, 'Tell me then about its signs'. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'That a slave-girl will give birth to her mistress, and that you will see barefooted, unclothed, destitute shepherds vying with one another in constructing magnificent houses'. The questioner left at this stage, and after a long while the Prophet (ﷺ) asked me, 'O 'Umar! Did you know who the questioner was'? I replied, 'Allāh and His Messenger know best'. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "That was [Angel] Jibrīl; he has come to teach you your religion". (*Muslim*: 8).

This is an important *hadīth*, which embodies all principles and degrees of religion, and symbolizes a unique approach to the teaching of Islam as a religion. It applies a methodology based on dialogue between an angelic Messenger, Jibrīl (ﷺ), the archangel, and a human Messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ), who is also the best of all mankind.

It is therefore advisable that Muslims should attach importance to this *hadīth* and borrow from it their approach to the process of teaching and learning. The pious predecessors -may Allāh be pleased with them- have also acted in the same way. More pertinently, the *hadīth* contains reference to the angels, and describes the belief in them as a pillar of Faith. Allāh knows best.

### **How do we believe in the angels?**

Believing in the angels comprises of certain things, which every believer in them must observe. They are as follows:

- 1- Believing in them and in their existence. The aforementioned texts have established this, just as they have also pointed to its being a pillar of Faith; hence, the faith would be invalid without it.
- 2- We should also believe in the multiplicity of their number, so that none but Allāh alone could tell their exact figure. The proof of this includes Almighty Allāh's saying that,

﴿وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ﴾

**And none knows the soldiers of your Lord save He [Himself].** (al-Muddaththir: 31). That is to say, in the opinion of some pious predecessors of the Muslim Ummah, due to the large number of the soldiers of your Lord, (i.e. the angels) none except Him alone knows them.

The lengthy *hadīth* of the Night Journey of the Prophet to heaven narrated by Mālik bin Sa'ṣah, (ﷺ) quotes Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying ,

(... ثم رفع لي البيت المعمور، قلت: يا جبريل! ما هذا؟ قال: هذا البيت المعمور، يدخله كل يوم سبعون ألف ملك، إذا خرجوا منه لم يعودوا فيه آخر ما عليهم).

"Then I was shown al-Bait al-Ma'mūr [i.e. the Frequented House in heaven], and I asked Jibril what it was. He replied, 'This is the Bait Ma'mūr; seventy thousand angels enter it every day, and when they have left, they never return to it<sup>(1)</sup>.'<sup>n</sup> (Bukhāri: 3207; Muslim: 164<sup>(2)</sup>).

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1- That means a fresh batch of angels enters it every day. (Translator)

2- The wording as quoted above is from the Muslim's compilation,

In another *hadīth* related by Muslim on the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه)، Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(فِي جَهَنَّمْ يُوْمَنْ هَا سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ زَمَامْ، مَعَ كُلِّ زَمَامْ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ مَلَكٍ بِحْرَوْفَهَا).

**Hellfire will be brought on that day with seventy thousand bridles, and with each bridle there will be seventy thousand angels dragging the hell.** (*Muslim*: 2842).

The two *hadīths* we have just mentioned are proofs on how large the number of the angels is. We have stated that a batch of seventy thousand angels enters the *Bait Ma’mūr* every day and never returns to it again, and that Hellfire will be dragged on the Day of Resurrection by such a great number of angels. Therefore, one can just imagine the multitude of other angels, charged with other various tasks! Only Allāh, their Creator, knows that.

3- The dignity of the angels, their high standing and nobility in the sight of their Lord should also be accorded necessary recognition. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَقَالُوا أَنْتَ رَبُّنَا وَلَدًا شَيْخُنَا بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّنْكَرُونَ ﴾ لَا يَسْتَقِرُهُمْ بِالْأَرْضِ  
وَهُمْ بِأَثْرِيٍّ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿﴾.

**And they say, 'The Most Merciful [Allāh] has taken unto Himself a son'. Glorified is He! Rather, they are [but] honoured servants [of His]. They do not utter a word until He has spoken, and on His order they act.** (*al-Anbiyā'*: 26 ,27).



**In the hands of scribes [angels]. Honourable, righteous.** (*Abasa*: 15, 16).

Here Allāh described them as being honoured by Him, and in another verse He says of them,

﴿فَالَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ يَسِّرُخُونَ لَهُ بِأَيْمَانِهِ وَأَنْهَارِهِ وَقُمْ لَا يَسْتَهِونَ ﴾

**Those who are near your Lord glorify Him by night and by day, and never do they become weary.** (Fussilat: 38).

Thus, He has qualified them as those who are near Him – an outstanding prestige indeed, in addition to being un-weary in worshipping Him.

Furthermore, in keeping with the angels' prestige in His sight, Allāh has sworn by them in some places in the Qur'aan. These include:

﴿وَالْجَنَّاتِي صَلَّى ① قَالَ رَجُلٌ ذُئْرٌ ② فَالْمُلْكَيْتُ ذَكْرًا ③﴾

[I swear] by those [angels] ranged in ranks<sup>(1)</sup>. And those who drive [the clouds] along. And those who recite the *Dhikr* [Qur'aan and other divine Books]. (al-Şsāffāt: 1-3).

﴿فَالْفَرَقَتْ فَرَقًا ① فَالْمُلْكَيْتُ ذَكْرًا ③﴾

And by those [angels] who bring criterion. And those who deliver messages [to Allāh's human Messengers]. (al-Mursalāt: 4 , 5).

Proofs of the honour Allāh has bestowed upon His angels are expressed in varying methods and multifarious contexts in the Glorious Qur'aan. These are so enormous and clear enough for any right minded person to observe. Establishing the same, from an Islamic viewpoint, is therefore inevitable.

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I- Or lined up in rows.

4- One should also believe that the angels have a hierarchy in terms of their positions in the sight of Allāh (ﷻ), as established in the religious texts. Allāh says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَصْطَلُفُ مِنَ الْمَلائِكَةِ رَسُولًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ بِحِلْهٖ﴾

Allāh chooses from the angels Messengers and from mankind. Allāh is indeed, All-Hearing, All-Seeing. (al-Hajj: 75).

﴿أَلَّا يَشَكُّفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لَّهُ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْقَرِيبُونَ﴾

Never would the Messiah disdain to be a servant of Allāh, nor would the angels who are near [to Him]. (al-Nisā': 172).

Here, we are told that some of the angels have been chosen to deliver Allāh's Message, while others are near Him; an indication of their superiority. Those who are near Allāh (*Al-Muqarrahūn*), in addition to the bearers of His Throne are the best of all angels, with just three among them occupying the highest positions. The trio are mentioned in a supplication, which the Prophet used to recite at the beginning of the night supererogatory *salāh* (prayer). He used to say,

(اللهم رب جبريل وMicāil وIsrāfi'l فاطر السموات والأرض عالم النسب والشهادة...).

**O Allāh! The Lord of Jibrīl, Mīkāl and Isrāfi'l. The Originator of the heavens and the earth, Who knows the seen and unseen.**  
(*Musnad Ahmad*: vol. vi p. 156; *Sunan al-Nasā'i* vol. iii p. 173 *hadīth* no. 1625<sup>(1)</sup>).

Among these three, Jibrīl is superior to the other two angels. He is the one entrusted to convey Allāh's revelation; his honour is

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I- An almost identical narration occurs as well in both *ṣahīḥ Muslim* (no. 770) and *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no. 1357).

therefore an upshot of his task. Allāh made mention of Jibrīl in the Qur'ān in a manner incomparable to the way any other angel has been mentioned. He has also called and described him with most honourable names and qualities, such as calling him the *Rūh*<sup>(1)</sup> in the following verses:

﴿نَزَّلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ﴾

**The Trustworthy *Rūh* has brought it [i.e. the Qur'ān].** (al-Shu'arā': 193).

﴿لَلَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا﴾

**Therein [on the Night of Decree<sup>(2)</sup>] descend the angels and the *Rūh*.** (al-Qadr: 4).

Furthermore, this epithet "*rūh*" is mentioned annexed to the Almighty Allāh's name, as another honour for its bearer, Jibrīl. Allāh says,

﴿فَإِذْ سَلَّمَ إِلَيْهَا رُوحٌ كَافِتُهُ لَهَا بَشِّرًا سَوِيًّا﴾

**Then We sent to her our *Rūh* who appeared before her in the form of a well proportioned man.** (Maryam: 17).

﴿قُلْ نَزَّلَ رُوحُ الْقَدِيرِ مِنْ رَبِّكَ﴾

**Say, 'The *Rūh* of the *Quds* brought it down from your Lord'.** (al-Nahl: 102). The word '*Quds*' here, according to the correct interpretation of the verse, refers to Allāh (ﷻ).

Jibrīl is further described in some other ways, including:

1- Literally, "spirit".

2- i.e. *Laylat al-Qadr* in the last ten nights of Ramadān. (Translator)

إِنَّمَا لِقَوْلِ رَسُولِكَ إِنَّمَا ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ مُطَّاعٌ حَمَّلَ أَمْبَانَهُ ﴿١٦﴾

Indeed, it is a word of [i.e. delivered by] an honoured Messenger, Possessed of power and, with [Allāh] the Owner of the Throne, highly ranked. Obeyed there [in the heavens] and trustworthy. (al-Takwīr: 19-21).

عَلَيْهِ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَّى ﴿١٧﴾ ذُو مِرْقَةٍ فَاسْتَوَى ﴿١٨﴾

He [the Prophet] has been taught [this Qur'ān] by one who is intense in strength. Free from any defect in body and in mind. He [Jibrīl] rose and became stable [in his true angelic form]. (al-Najm: 5, 6).

Thus, Allāh described Jibrīl as His Messenger, and as being honourable, mighty and distinguished in His sight. Jibrīl was also described as being obeyed in the heavens, trustworthy in the conveyance of revelation, in addition to being of handsome physical appearance.

5- We must love the angels with all patronage and advocacy, and should not perceive them as enemies. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَيَاءُكُمْ بَعْضٌ ﴿١﴾

**The believers, males and females, are friends (supporters) of one another.** (al-Tawbah: 71).

The fact that the angels are also believers in Allāh and obedient to Him, leaves no doubt concerning their inclusion here. The words of Allāh referring to the angels as being submissive to His orders read as follows:

﴿لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمْرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يَنْهَا مُرِسُونَ﴾

They [the angels] resist not any command from Allāh, but do that which they are ordered. (al-Tahrīm: 6).

Allāh has also informed us that the angels, on their part, similarly love and support the Messenger and his followers, the believers. He said,

﴿إِنَّمَا تَنظَّمُهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَاهُمْ وَجِيلٌ وَصَاحِلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

But if you help one another against him [the Prophet], then indeed, Allāh is his Protector, and Jibril and the righteous among the believers. (al-Tahrīm: 4).

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلْمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ﴾

He [Allāh] it is Who sends His blessings on you, and so do His angels. That He may bring you forth from darkness unto light. (al-Ahzāb: 43).

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوا رَبِّكَ اللَّهَ ثُمَّ اتَّقَمُوا تَسْرِعُنَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَا أَضَافُوا وَلَا  
مُخْرِجُوا﴾

Indeed, those who have said, 'Our Lord is Allāh' and afterward were upright, the angels will descend upon them [saying,] 'Fear not nor grieve'. (Fussilat: 30).

Believers are therefore duty-bound to love and support the angels, as reciprocation of their love, help, support and asking Allāh to forgive the believers as well. Similarly, Allāh warned against being hostile to His angels. He says,

﴿مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلَّهِ وَرَبِّكَ هُوَ وَرَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّكُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكُفَّارِينَ﴾

Whoever is an enemy to Allāh, His angels, His Messengers, Jibril and Mīkāl – then indeed, Allāh is an enemy to the unbelievers. (al-Baqarah: 98).

Here, Allāh declared that harbouring hatred for His angels also provokes His own enmity and wrath. The angels only act according to Allāh's instruction; being hostile to them is, therefore, tantamount to being hostile to Allāh Himself.

6- Believing that angels are mere creatures of Allāh, and have no say, neither in the creation of the universe nor in the running of its affairs. They are but forces of Almighty Allāh, who act on His orders. The disposition of all affairs is totally in the Hands of Allāh; no-one shares any portion thereof with Him.

Moreover, it is unlawful to devote any act of worship to the angels. Rather, their Creator, who has also created all other creatures and has neither a partner nor a peer in His Lordship, Divinity, Names and Attributes, should alone be worshipped. Allāh says in explaining this point,

﴿ وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تَتَعَذَّذُوا لِلْكَوَافِرِ وَالرَّبِيعَنَ أَرْبَابًا أَيَّاً مَرْكُمْ بِإِلَكْفَرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾  
Neither could he [a Prophet of Allāh] command you to take the angels and Prophets as lords. Would he order you to disbelieve after you had been Muslims? (Al-`Imrān: 80).

﴿ وَقَالُوا أَنْحَدَ الرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدَ أَسْبَخَهُنَّ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكَرَّمُونَ ⑤ لَا يَسْتَغْوِيَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ ⑥ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْلَمُونَ ⑦ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يَنْتَعِزُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أَرَضَنَّهُ وَهُمْ مِنْ خَنَبِهِ مُشَفِّقُونَ ⑧ وَمَنْ يَقْلِلُ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ دُولِهِ ۚ هَذِهِكَذَلِكَ بَغْرِيَ الظَّالِمِينَ ⑨ ﴾

And they say, 'The Most Merciful [Allāh] has taken unto Himself a son'. Glorified is He! Rather, they are [but] honoured servants [of His]. They do not utter a word until He has spoken, and on His order they act. He knows what is before them and what is behind

them, and they cannot intercede except for one whom He approves of. And they, from fear of Him, are apprehensive. And whoever of them should say, 'Indeed, I am a god besides Him', such We will recompense with hellfire. Thus do We recompense the wrongdoers. (al-Anbiyā': 26-29).

Here, Allāh made it known that He has never ordered the worship of the angels. And how could He have ordered that when such is an act of disbelief in Him? Subsequently, Allāh disproved the claim that the angels are His daughters, and raised Himself far above such a false claim. He also declared that they are but servants whom He has chosen to honour. They abide by His order, apprehensive from fear of Him, and could not intervene on behalf of anyone except him among the monotheists with whom He is pleased. In conclusion, Allāh explained that hell is the punishment for any of the angels who dares to claim that he is a god. It is thus evident from the foregoing that the angels are mere servants of Allāh and under His absolute control. On Him alone they depend to derive any strength or power, whatsoever.

7- Believing specifically in those angels who are mentioned by name in either the Qur'ān or the *Sunnah*. They include Jibrīl, Mīkāl, Isrāfil, Mālik, Hārūt, Mārūt, Ridwān, Munkar, Nakir and any other angel who has been specifically mentioned in divine texts. This list also comprises those angels whose description is given in the texts, such as *Raqib* and *'Atid* (An observer who is prepared to record every deed), and those who are identified with certain functions, like the Death Angel and the Angel of the mountains. It includes also those whose collective tasks are spelled out generally, as in the cases of the

bearers of the Throne, the honourable scribes, the angels charged with the protection of Allāh's creation, those entrusted with the safety of embryos and the uteruses, those who perform circumambulation (*tawāf*) round *al-Bait al-Mu'mīr* in the heaven, as well as those who tour around the globe, etc. Our faith in this respect should be specific and strictly in accordance with what we find in the texts concerning their names, qualities, functions and information. We shall discuss all this in the coming pages *insha Allāh*.

The above represents the bulk of what we must believe in, regarding the angels, as contained in the Islamic texts. Allāh, the Exalted knows best.

### 1.3 Functions of the angels

Angels are a section of Almighty Allāh's soldiers. He has assigned to them many important roles and assignments, and equipped them with the necessary strength to enable them perform their duties effectively. Based on their diversified predispositions and responsibilities, the angels are divisible along the following lines:

**Angel Jibrīl**, who is responsible for the conveyance of Allāh's revelation to the human Messengers, May the peace and blessing be upon them. Allāh says,

﴿نَزَّلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴾ ﴿عَلَىٰ فِيلِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِّرِينَ ﴾ ﴿بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيًّا مُّبِينًا﴾  
The trustworthy *Rūh*<sup>(1)</sup> has brought it [i.e. the Qur'aan]. Upon your heart [O Muhammād], that you may be of the warners. In a clear Arabic tongue. (al-Shu'arā': 193-195).

Jibrīl, as we have mentioned earlier, is the archangel and the most honourable of all angels in the sight of Allāh, Who has accordingly described him as powerful and trustworthy in discharging his responsibilities.

The Prophet (ﷺ) only saw him in his angelic form twice, while on all other occasions he appeared to him in the form of a man. In one of those two angelic appearances, the Prophet (ﷺ) saw him in the horizon, towards the east. On this, Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿وَلَقَدْ رَأَهُ بِالْأَقْبَابِ الْمُبِينِ﴾.

**And indeed, he [Muhammād] has seen him [Jibrīl] in the clear horizon.** (al-Takwīr: 23).

I- Literally, 'spirit'.

The other time the Prophet (ﷺ) saw Jibrīl was in the heaven, on the night of *Isrā'*. Allāh says,

﴿وَلَقَدْ رَأَهُ مَرَّةً أُخْرَى ﴾١٣﴿عِنْدَ سَدْرَةِ الْمَكْافِئِ﴾ ١٤﴿عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْأَذْرَى﴾ ١٥﴾.

And surely, he has seen him [Jibrīl] in another descent [on another occasion]. At the Lote-tree of the Utmost Boundary. Near it is the Paradise of Abode. (*al-Najm*: 13-15).

According to Muslim's compilation of the *hadīth*, 'Āishah (رضي الله عنها) asked the Prophet (ﷺ) to explain the above quoted verses, and he said,

(إِنَّمَا هُوَ جِبْرِيلُ لَمْ أَرَهُ عَلَى صُورَتِهِ الْجَلِيلَةِ خَلَقَ عَلَيْهَا غَيْرَ هَاتِينِ الْمَرَّيْنِ رَأَيْتَهُ مُنْهَبَّاً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ  
سَادَ عَظِيمُ خَلْقِهِ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ (إِلَى الْأَرْضِ).)

"That was Jibrīl, who I have not seen in his real angelic form except on these two occasions. I saw him descending from the heaven with the magnitude of his physical appearance covering the distance between the heavens and the earth". (*Muslim*: 177).

Another angel is Mīkāl, who takes charge of raindrops, plantations and crops. He has been mentioned in the Qur'ān as follows,

﴿مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجَبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَلَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ  
لِلْكُفَّارِ﴾.

Whoever is an enemy to Allāh, His angels, His Messengers, Jibrīl and Mīkāl, then indeed, Allāh is an enemy to the unbelievers. (*al-Baqarah*: 98).

Angel Mīkāl occupies a high position with his Lord. No wonder He made special mention of both him and Jibrīl in the above verse, even after he had earlier mentioned the more general

appellation -"His angels"- to show how important the two of them are. Mīkāl is also mentioned in the *Sunnah*, as we have quoted earlier the Prophetic supplication for the night non-obligatory prayer, when he would say,

(اللهم رب جبريل وميكائيل وإسرافيل...).

**"O Allāh! The Lord of Jibril, Mīkāl and Isrāfil..."**. (*Musnad Ahmād*: vol. vi p.156; *Sunan al-Nasā'i* vol. iii p.173 *hadīth* no. 1625<sup>(1)</sup>). The Muslim scholars have deduced from this that the trio of Jibril, Mīkāl and Isrāfil are the best of all angels.

The last mentioned in the *hadīth*, Isrāfil, is charged with the responsibility of blowing the *Šūr*<sup>(2)</sup>, in addition to being one of the bearers of Allāh's Throne. Imam Ahmād reported on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنهما) that a Bedouin once came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and asked him what was the *Šūr*? The Prophet (ﷺ) answered,

(قرن ينفع فيه).

**"A horn which will be blown"**. (*Musnad Ahmād*: vol. ii p.162, 192). This *hadīth* was also related by Hākim<sup>(3)</sup>, and both he and Dhahabi declared it an authentic narration.

According to both Ahmād and Tirmidhi, Abu Sa'īd al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) also narrated a *hadīth* quoting the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

- 1- An almost identical narration occurs as well in both *sahīh Muslim* (no. 770) and *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no 1357).
- 2- This *Šūr* is in the form of a huge horn.
- 3- *Mustadrak* vol ii p. 506; iv p. 589. The *hadīth* has been quoted directly from this source.

(كيف أنتم وقد التقم صاحب القرن وحني جبهته وأصغى سمعه ينظر حق يزمر، قال المسلمون: يا رسول الله فما تقول؟ قال: قولوا حسينا الله ونعم الوكيل على الله توكلنا). "How can I feel comfortable, when the holder of the Horn has devoured it! With his forehead bent, he listens attentively waiting to see when he will be ordered [to blow the Horn]. The Muslims [i.e. the audience] said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, what should we say then?' He replied, 'say, 'Hasbuna Allāh wa ni'ma al-Wakīl, 'ala Allāh tawakkalnā' (Allāh is sufficient for us, and He is the best Disposer of affairs. We put our trust in Allāh).'." (*Musnad Ahmad*: vol. iii p.vii; *Sunan Tirmidhi* vol iv p. 620 no. 2431; vol. v pp. 372-373 no. 3243).

This is a fairly sound *hadīth* (*hasan*), in the opinion of Tirmidhi, but authentic (*sahīh*) according to some other scholars.

Angel Isrāfīl will blow the Horn three times; the blast of panic, followed by that of swoon, and finally the blast of resurrection. Allāh says as He refers to the first blow,

﴿وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَقَرِيرٌ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُمْلِئَ الْأَرْضَ ثُمَّ يُنْفَخُ فِيهِمْ﴾  
And [remember] the day when the Horn will be blown, all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth will start in fear, except whom Allāh will [exempt]. (*al-Naml*: 87).

The proof of the other two blows comes in the following verse:

﴿وَنُفَخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُمْلِئَ الْأَرْضَ ثُمَّ يُنْفَخُ فِيهِمْ فَإِذَا هُمْ يَقَامُونَ يَنْظَرُونَ﴾  
And the Horn will be blown. All who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth will swoon away, except whom Allāh will [exempt]. Then it will blown a second time, and, at once, they will be standing, looking on. (*al-Zumar*: 68).

There is another angel, whose primary function is life termination; hence, he is called The Angel of Death (*Malak al-Mawt*). Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿قُلْ يَسْأَلُكُمْ مَلَكُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي قَدْ يُكَلِّبُكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾

Say, 'The Angel of Death, who is set over you, will take your souls. Then to your Lord you will be returned'. (*al-Sajdah*: 11).

The angel of death has under him some angelical subordinates, who appear to a person at the point of death. The mode of this appearance varies from one person to another; they appear in a most pleasant mood to the righteous and in a most horrible way to the sinful. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ أَحَدُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ نَوْفَتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُغَرِّطُونَ﴾

Until when death has approached one of you, Our Messengers [Angel of Death and his aides] take his soul, and they do not neglect their duty. (*al-An'ām*: 61).

**The angel entrusted with the mountains** is called 'The Angel of the Mountains' (*Malak al-Jibāl*). He is mentioned in a *hadīth* narrating the Prophet's bitter experience at the advent of his mission with the people of Tāif<sup>(1)</sup> who had then turned down the invitation to Islam. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(إِنَّمَا أَنَا بِسَحَابَةٍ قَدْ أَخْلَقْتِي، فَنَظَرْتُ إِذَا فِيهَا جَبَرِيلٌ، فَنَادَانِي فَقَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ سَعَى قَرْوَمَكَ لَكَ وَمَا زَدَوا عَلَيْكَ، وَقَدْ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ مَلَكَ الْجِبَالَ لِتَعْلَمَهُ بِمَا شَتَّتَ فِيهِمْ، فَنَادَانِي مَلَكُ الْجِبَالِ. فَسَلَمَ عَلَيَّ ثُمَّ قَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ، فَقَالَ: ذَلِكَ فِيمَا شَتَّتَ، إِنِّي شَتَّتَ أَنْ أَطْبِقَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَعْشَيْنَ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: إِنِّي أَرْجُو أَنْ يَخْرُجَ اللَّهُ مِنْ أَصْلَاهِمْ مِنْ يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ لَا يُشَرِّكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا).

I- A city near Makkah, at a distance of about 85 km. (Translator)

"Suddenly, I was shaded by a cloud. As I looked up I saw Angel Jibrīl in that cloud. He called me and said, 'Allāh has heard what your people said and their response to your call. Now He has sent to you the Angel of the Mountains, so that you may command him to deal with them in a manner you deem fit'. Then the Angel of the Mountains also called me, greeted me and then said, 'O Muhammad, that is left to you; if you like, I will cause the two mountains [of Makkah; Abū Qubais and the one facing it] to fall on them'. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'No, I rather hope that Allāh will bring forth from among their offspring who would worship Him alone and would not associate partners with Him'." (*Sahīh Bukhārī*: 3231; *Sahīh Muslim*: 1795).

**Another angel is entrusted with the safety of the uteruses.**  
Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,  
(إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ رَكَّلَ بِالرَّحْمَمِ مَلَكًا يَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ الْأَنْفُسِ! يَا رَبِّ الْعَلَمَاتِ! يَا رَبِّ الْمَضَائِفِ!  
فَإِنِّي أَرَادَ أَنْ يَغْصِبَ خَلْقَهُ، قَالَ: اذْكُرْ إِمَّا أَنْتَ؟ شَفِيْ أَمْ سَعِدْ؟ فَمَا الْوَزْنُ وَالْأَجْلُ؟ فَيَكْبُرُ  
فِي بَطْنِ أُمِّهِ).

"Allāh has appointed for the womb an angel who says, 'O Lord! A drop of semen, O Lord! A clot, O Lord! A little lump of flesh'. And if Allāh wishes to complete its creation, the angel will ask: 'Male or female? Wretched or blessed? What about his/her provisions, and how long will he/she live'? All that is written while the child is in the mother's womb". (*Sahīh Bukhārī*: 318; *Sahīh Muslim*: 2646).

**The bearers of Allāh's Throne are also among the angels.**  
Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ السَّرَّاجَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ، يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَسْأَلُونَ يَوْمًا وَيَسْأَلُونَ لِلَّذِينَ  
عَامَتْهَا ﴾

Those who carry the Throne and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for the believers. (Ghāfir: 7).

﴿ وَكَجْلُ عَرْشٍ رَبِّكَ فَوْهُمْ بِوَهْنِهِ مُغْنِيَةٌ ﴾

And eight [of the angels] will, that day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them. (al-Hāqqah: 17).

According to a Muslim scholar, those angels around the Throne are known as the *Karrūbiyyān*, who, together with the bearers of the Throne (*Hamalatu al-'Arsh*), are of the highest rank among the angels<sup>(1)</sup>.

Another group of the angels are the keepers of Paradise. Allah (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَسَبِّقَ الَّذِينَ أُنْقَوْرُهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَرَفِيعَتْ أَبُوكِيهَا وَقَالَ لَهُنَّا  
خَرَقْنَاهَا سَلَمْ عَلَيْكُمْ طَبِيعَتْ فَادْخُلُوهَا حَنَيلِينَ ﴾

And those who feared their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups until when they reach there while its gates have been opened and its keepers say, 'Peace be upon you; you have done well; so enter it to abide therein eternally'. (al-Zumar: 73).

﴿ جَنَّاتٍ عَدِينَ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ وَذَرِيَّهُمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ ﴾

Gardens of eternal residence; they will enter them with whoever were righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their descendants. And the angels will enter upon them from every gate. (al-Ra'd: 23).

I- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr* vol. vii p. 120.

There are also the warders of Hell otherwise known as the *Zabāniyyah*, including nineteen of them who serve as chief warders –We seek refuge in Allāh from Hell–. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ فِي النَّارِ لِحَزْنِهِ جَهَنَّمَ أَذْعُوا إِلَيْكُمْ بِخَفْفَ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ﴾.

And those in the Fire will say to the guards of Hell, 'Entreat your Lord to relieve us of a day of the torment'. (Ghāfir: 49).

﴿فَلَدُغُ سَادِيهٌ، ﴿١٧﴾ سَدْعُ الْأَرْبَانِيَةِ ﴾.

Then, let him [the culprit] call his associates. We shall call out the guards of Hell. (al-'Alaq: 17,18).

﴿عَلَيْهَا قُسْطَنْتُهُ عَنْتَرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَمَا جَعَلَكَ أَحْصَنَّ بِالنَّارِ إِلَّا مَلِكُكَهُ وَمَا جَعَلَكَ عَذَابَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِلْكُفَّارِ ﴾.

Over it [Hellfire] are nineteen [angels]. And We have appointed none but the angels as guardians of the Fire. And their number We have made only to be a trial for the unbelievers. (al-Muddaththir: 30, 31).

﴿وَنَادُوا يَكْتُلُكُ لِيَقْضِي عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكُ فَلَمْ يَكُنْ مُنْكُرُونَ ﴾.

And they will cry out, 'O Mālik<sup>(1)</sup>, let your Lord put us to death'. He will say, 'Indeed, here you must remain'. (al-Zukhruf: 77).

More information about this angel called 'Mālik' and his being a guard of Hell comes in a *hadīth* related by *Bukhārī* on the authority of Samura bin Jundub (رضي الله عنه) who quoted Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying,

(رأيت الليلة رجلاً في ناراً: الذي يورق النار مالك حارن النار، وأن جبريل، وهذا ميكائيل).  
I saw tonight two men who came to me and said, 'That [angel] you see kindling the fire is Mālik, the keeper of Hell. I am Jibril and this is Mīkā'il. (*sahih Bukhārī*: 3236).

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I- i.e. one of the guards of Hell.

**The world of the angels also includes visitors of *al-Bait al-Mā'mūr*.** A fresh batch of seventy thousand angels enter it every day as reported by Mālik bin Sa'īdah (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(فُرِّجَ رُفْعٌ فِي الْبَيْتِ الْمَعْوُرِ، قَلَّتْ: يَا جِبْرِيلُ! مَا هَذَا؟ قَالَ: هَذَا الْبَيْتُ الْمَعْوُرُ. يَدْخُلُهُ كُلُّ يَوْمٍ سَبْعُونَ آلْفَ مَلَكٍ، إِذَا خَرَجُوكُمْ مِنْهُ لَمْ يَعْرِدُوكُمْ فِيهِ أَخْرَى مَا عَلَيْهِمْ).

"Then I was shown *al-Bait al-Mā'mūr* [i.e. the frequented house in heaven], and I asked Jibrīl what it was. He replied, 'This is *al-Bait al-Mā'mūr*; seventy thousand angels enter it every day, and when they have left, they never return to it'." (*Bukhāri*: 3207; *Muslim*: 164)<sup>(1)</sup>.

The *Sayyāḥūn* (Those who tour round the globe) are another group among the angels. They seek the company of people who gather to make *Dhikr* (Remembrance of Allāh). A *hadīth* narrated by Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) has it that,

(إِنَّهُ مِنْ أَنْجَلٍ يَطْلُو فِي الْطُّرُقِ يَأْتِمُونَ أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ فَإِذَا وَجَدُوا قَوْمًا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ تَادُوا هَلَمْوًا إِلَى حَاجِتِكُمْ قَالَ فَيُحَفِّرُوهُمْ بِأَجْهَنَمِهِمْ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا ...).

Allāh has some angels who go round searching for those who remember Allāh. As soon as they find any group that engages in the remembrance of Allāh they call each other and say, 'Come on to the object of your pursuit'! The Prophet (ﷺ) added, 'Then the angels encircle them with their wings up to the nearest heaven'. (*yaḥīḥ Bukhāri*: 6408; *ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2689)<sup>(2)</sup>.

1- The wording as quoted above is from the Muslim's compilation.

2- The *hadīth* as quoted above is from *ṣaḥīḥ Bukhāri*.

This group of angels, according to Muslim scholars, are different from others who have been charged with specific duties relating to Allāh's creatures, like the Guardians (*al-Hafazah*) for example.

It is also firmly established in a *hadīth* that part of their duty is to communicate to the Prophet (ﷺ) greetings from his followers. The *hadīth* was related by both Ahmad and al-Nasā'i with a sound chain of transmission, and on the authority of 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd (رض), that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَ مَلَائِكَةٌ سَيَاحُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْلُغُونِي مِنْ أَمْمِي الصَّلَامَ).

Allāh (ﷻ) has some angels who tour round the globe; they convey to me greetings from my *ummah* (i.e. my adherents). (*Musnād Ahmad*: vol. i p. 452; *Sunan al-Nasā'i* vol. iii p. 43 *hadīth* no. 1282)<sup>(1)</sup>.

Another group of angels are the Honourable Scribes (*Kirām Kātibūn*), whose duty is to record and compute the deeds of Allāh's creatures. Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿وَلَيَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لِتُوفِّيَنَّ ﴾ ﴿كَرَامًا كَيْفَيَنَ ﴾ ﴿يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ ﴿ۚ﴾

And indeed, over you are [appointed] keepers. Honourable, writing down [your deeds]. They know whatever you do. (*al-Insfār*: 10-12).

﴿إِذْ يَنْكُفُ الْمُتَكَبِّرَانِ عَنِ الْبَيْنِ وَعَنِ الْمُشَاهِدِ فَيَقُولُ ﴿ۚ﴾ ﴿مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَنِيدٌ﴾  
[Remember] that the two receivers receive, one sitting on the right and the other on the left. He<sup>(2)</sup> does not utter a word except that with him is an observer, ready to record [it]. (Qāf: 17-18 ).

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1- The *hadīth* as quoted above is from *Musnād Ahmad*.

2- i.e. human being, male or female.

Mujāhid, a notable scholar, said in his interpretation of these verses, "There is an angel on his right and another on his left. The angel on the right writes down his good deeds, while his bad deeds are also being recorded by the angel seated on the left".

**There are some other angels vested with the power to try and interrogate the dead in their graves.** They are called "Munkar and Nakīr", as established in some authentic *hadīths*. *Bukhāri* and *Muslim* related on the authority of Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said,

(إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا رُضِّعَ فِي قَبْرٍ وَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُ أَصْحَابِهِ، إِنَّهُ لَيُسْمَعُ قَرْعَ نَعَالِمٍ أَتَاهُ مَلْكَانٌ، فَيَقْعُدُ إِنَّهُ فِي قَوْلَانٍ؛ مَا كَنْتَ تَقُولُ فِي هَذَا الرَّجُلِ حَمْدًا لِلَّهِ فَلَمَّا تَوَلَّ مِنْ فِي قَوْلٍ أَشْهَدَ أَنَّهُ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ فَيُقَالُ لَهُ: انْظُرْ إِلَى مَقْعِدِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ قَدْ أَيْدَلَكَ اللَّهُ بِهِ مَقْعِدًا مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ فِي رَأْسِ الْمَهَاجِعِ).

When a person has been lowered into his grave and his people have returned home leaving him behind. Even as he certainly hears their footsteps, two angels come to him, get him seated and then say, 'What did you use to say of this man (Muhammad ﷺ)'? Any dead person who had been a believer will say, 'I testify that he is a servant of Allāh and His Messenger'. Then it will be said to him, 'Look at your seat in the Hellfire; Allāh has given you in place of that another seat in Paradise'. And he will see both seats. (*Bukhāri*: 1374; *Muslim*: 2870)<sup>(1)</sup>.

A similar narration comes from Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), according to both Tirmidhi and Ibn Hibbān. The Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) was reported to have said,

I- The *hadīth* as quoted above is from *sahīh Bukhāri*.

(إِنَّ فِي الْمَيْتِ – أَوْ قَالَ أَحَدُكُمْ – أَتَاهُ مَلِكَانٌ أَسْوَدَانٌ لِرَزْقَنِ يَقُولُ لِأَحَدِهِنَا الْمُنْكَرُ وَالْأَخْرَى  
الْكَبِيرُ فِي قَوْلَانِ: مَا كَتَبَتْ تَقُولُ فِي هَذَا الرَّجُلِ ...).

When a dead person [or perhaps he said 'one of you'] is buried, two black-blue angels<sup>(1)</sup> come to him. One of them is called *Al-Munkar* and the other *Al-Nakir*. They will say, 'What did you use to say concerning this man ...'. (*Sunan Tirmidhi; Ibn Hibbān*)<sup>(2)</sup>.

Those we have mentioned above are the most famous of the angels whose names or functions are precisely defined in religious texts. It is incumbent upon every person to believe in their existence and accept as true whatever is said concerning them in the divine texts. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

### The benefits of the belief in the angels

Believing in the angels provides many significant benefits for the believers. These include:

1- Recognizing the sublimity of the Almighty Creator, as well as His perfect power and authority.

2- Appreciation of the kindness and care Allāh (ﷻ) has for His creatures. This is manifested through appointing, for those creatures,

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1- This may also be translated as "two black angels with blue eyes", according to Sheikh Mubarakafūri in his commentary on *Sunan Tirmidhi* (*Tuhfat al-Ahwādhi*), vol. iv, p. 155.

2- *Sunan Tirmidhi*, vol. iii p.385, *hadīth* no. 1073; *al-Ihsān fi taqrib sahiḥ Ibn Hibbān* vol. vii p. 386, *hadīth* no. 3117. The *hadīth* as quoted above is in accordance with the Tirmidhi's version, who has also classified the *hadīth* as a fairly sound *hadīth*.

angels who look after them, record their deeds and do many other things in their interest, whether worldly or heavenly.

3- Loving the angels on the basis of what Allāh has guided them to do, such as their worshipping Allāh in a most perfect manner, their assistance for the faithful and their pleading for Allāh's forgiveness on their behalf.

## **Chapter Two: The Belief in Books Revealed by Allāh**

**Introduction:** Linguistic and Islamic meaning of Revelation (*al-Wahy*), and its types.

**2.1 Rule concerning the belief in Divine Books and the proofs thereof.**

**2.2 The way of believing in the Divine Books.**

**2.3 The distortion of the Torah, *Injīl* (Gospel) and some other books excluding the Qur'ān.**

**2.4 Believing in the Qur'ān and the characteristics of that.**

## Introduction: Linguistic and Islamic meaning of Revelation (*al-Wahy*), and its types.

Literally, the word '*wahy*' is used for any fast and mysterious communication. Thus, *wahy* may be a gesture, writing, message or inspiration; any information you successfully pass to others, through whatever channel, constitutes a *wahy*. In this sense, *wahy* is neither confined to the Prophets nor restricted to Allāh's divine revelations.

The linguistic denotation of the word '*wahy*' covers, as well, the following areas:

- 1- Natural inspiration for humankind, such as in the case of the mother of Prophet Mūsa (ﷺ), of which Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أُرْضِعَيْهِ ﴾

And we inspired the mother of Mūsa [saying], 'Breast-feed him'.  
(al-Qaṣāṣ; 7).

- 2- Instinctive inspiration to animals, like the one to the bees as mentioned in the following verse:

﴿ وَأَوْحَى رَبُّكَ إِلَيْكَ أَنَّ الْأَنْجَلَى مِنْ لِلْكَالِ يُوَلِّ ﴾

And your Lord inspired the bees [saying] 'Take your habitations in the mountains...' (al-Nahl; 68).

- 3- A quick signal indicating a symbol or suggestion. Such a gesture was once used by Prophet Zakariyah (Zachariah) (ﷺ) to communicate with his people. Allāh says,

﴿فَرَجَعَ عَلَىٰ فَوْرَمِهِ مِنَ الْمُحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَى إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْ سَبِّحُوا بِكُرْبَةٍ وَعَنْشِيَا﴾

Then he [Zakariyyah] came out to his people from the prayer chamber and signalled to them [saying], 'Glorify [Allāh] in the morning and afternoon'. (Maryam: 11).

4- The insinuation of the Devil, and the evil he portrays to be fair-seeming in the minds of his confederates. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَيَوْحِدُ إِلَىٰ أَزْلَافِهِ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ﴾

And certainly the devils inspire their associates to dispute with you. (al-An'ām: 121).

5- What Allāh reveals to the angels of His orders. Allāh says,

﴿إِذَا نُوحِي رِبِّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَلَيَقْتُلُوا الَّذِينَ مَأْمُونُوا﴾

[Remember] when your Lord revealed to the angels that 'I am indeed with you, so keep firm those who have believed'. (al-Aufāl: 12).

### Meaning of Revelation (*Wahy*) from an Islamic viewpoint

That is: "Allāh's communication to His Prophets whatever He likes of His laws or Scriptures, either directly or through an intermediary".

### Types of Revelation

Receiving a revelation from Allāh is accomplished in many ways, summed up in the following Qur'ānic verse:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِشَرِيكٍ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ أَلَا وَجِئَ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِي حَكَمْ أَوْ بُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوْحِي  
بِيَادِنِي، مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ حَكْمِي﴾

And it is not for any human being that Allāh should speak to him, unless through revelation; or from behind a partition; or that He

sends a Messenger to reveal, by His Permission, whatever He will. Indeed, He is Most High, Most Wise. (al-Shūrā: 51).

Here, Allāh declared that His speech or revelation to human beings comes in three categories:

**First: Sheer Inspiration.** That is what Allāh casts into the heart of a receiver of His revelation, who will know for sure that Allāh, and none else, is the source of such a revelation. The phrase 'Unless through revelation' (al-Shūrā: 51) in the just quoted verse serves as proof to this. An instance of this type of revelation is also given in a *hadīth* narrated by 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) who quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(إِنَّ رُوحَ الْقَدْسِ نَفَثَ فِي رُوْعِيَّ أَنَّهُ لَنْ تَمُوتْ نَفْسٌ حَتَّى تَسْكُنْ إِلَيْهَا فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَلُوا فِي الْطَّلَبِ).

The *Rūh al-Quds* [i.e. Archangel Jibrīl] has breathed into my heart that no soul will die unless it had exhausted its [God-given] provision. So fear Allāh and be reasonable in the quest [for your livelihood]. (*Sahīh Ibn Hībān*<sup>(1)</sup>; *al-Mustadrak* vol. ii p.iv; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, *hadīth* no. 2144; *Ibn Abī Dunyā*, *al-Qanā'ī*; *al-Baihaqī*, *Shu'ab al-īmān*<sup>(2)</sup>; *al-Baghawī*, vol.xiv p.304 *hadīth* no. 4112}<sup>(3)</sup>.

This type of revelation embodies, according to some scholars, what a Prophet of Allāh sees in a dream. A Qur'ānic account of such a dream which Prophet Ibrāhīm (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) had goes as follows:

1- See: *Mawārid al-Zamān*, *hadīth* no. 1084, 1085.

2- See: *al-Mughnī 'an Ḥaml al-Asfār*, pp. 419,895.

3- This is a sound *hadīth* according to Ḥākim and Dhahabī.

﴿كَالْيَتَّهُ إِنِّي أَرَى فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أُذْبَحُكَ﴾

He [Ibrāhīm] said, 'O my son, I have indeed seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you'. (*al-Şāfiṭāt*: 102).

Another example is the dream our Prophet, Muhammad (ﷺ) used to have at the earliest stage of his mission. According to both *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, 'Aisha (رضي الله عنها) said,

(أَوْلَى مَا يَدْعَ بِهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ مِنَ الْوَحْيِ الرُّزْبَانِ الصَّالِحةِ فِي النَّوْمِ فَكَانَ لَا يُرَى رُزْبًا إِلَّا جَاءَتْ مُثْلَ قَلْقَ الْصَّبِحِ).  
First what he was ordered by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ from the divine revelation in sleep was the righteous dream which was like bright daylight. (Bukhārī, *hadīth* no. 3; Muslim, *hadīth* no. 160)<sup>(1)</sup>.

The revelation to Allāh's Messenger began with good dreams. He had no dream except that it turned to be real (clear) like bright daylight. (*Bukhārī*, *hadīth* no. 3; *Muslim*, *hadīth* no. 160)<sup>(1)</sup>.

## Second: Talking to the recipient directly from behind a partition.

The Prophets with whom Allāh has communicated in this mode include:

- Mūsa (摩西), as mentioned in a number of Qur'anic verses, such as:

﴿وَكَلَمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكَلَّمُ لَهُ﴾

And to Mūsa Allāh has spoken directly. (*al-Nisā'*: 164).

﴿وَكَلَمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى لِمَيَّقَنَاهُ وَكَلَمَهُ رَبِّهُ﴾

And when Mūsa came at the time and place We had appointed and his Lord spoke to him. (*al-A'rāf*: 143).

Ādām (آدم), according to a saying of Allāh that:

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I- The *hadīth* as quoted above is from *ṣahīḥ Bukhārī*; *Muslim* only related an almost similar version.

فَلَقَنَّا عَادَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَتَنِي ﴿٤﴾

**Then Ādām received from his Lord [some] words.** (al-Baqarah: 37).

- Muḥammad (ﷺ), to whom, according to proofs from the *Sunnah*, Allāh has also spoken during his night journey to heaven.

The proof of this category of Allāh's revelation in the earlier quoted verse is the phrase: "... or from behind a partition", (al-Shūrā: 51).

**Third: Revelation through an angel**, such as the coming down of Angel Jibrīl with revelation from Allāh to His Messengers and Prophets. The proof of this form of revelation is in the clause: "... or that He sends a Messenger to reveal, by His Permission, whatever He will". (al-Shūrā: 51).

The whole of the Glorious Qurān has been revealed in this way; uttered by Almighty Allāh to the hearing of Angel Jibrīl, who in turn conveyed it to Muḥammad (ﷺ). Allāh says,

﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرٌ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ ﴿١٩٣﴾ نَزَّلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٤﴾ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُذَكَّرِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾

And truly it [the Qurān] is the revelation of the Lord of all beings. The trustworthy *Ruh* has brought it down upon your heart [O Muḥammad], that you may be of the warners... (al-Shu'arā': 192-194).

﴿قُلْ شَرِّكُهُ رُوحُ الْمُفْدُسِينَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ ﴾ ﴿١٩٦﴾

Say, "The *Ruh*<sup>(1)</sup> of the Quds [Allāh] brought it down from your Lord in truth. (al-Nahl: 102).

1- i.e. Angel Jibrīl (ﷺ). (Translator)

Jibrīl (ﷺ) communicated Allāh's revelation to our Prophet (ﷺ) using three different methods:

1- He appeared to the Prophet (ﷺ) twice in his real angelic form, as we have mentioned in the previous chapter<sup>(1)</sup>.

2- Sometimes, the revelation would come to the Prophet (ﷺ) as the ringing of a bell, and when it has ceased he recalled whatever Jibrīl had said.

3- Jibrīl (ﷺ) used to appear occasionally in the form of a man, and communicate the message to the Prophet (ﷺ). An example of this is the earlier mentioned *hadīth*<sup>(2)</sup>, where Jibrīl came to ask the Prophet (ﷺ) questions relating to the degrees of the religion of Islam.

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us of the second and third methods mentioned above when he fielded a question put to him by al-Hārith bin Hishām (رض), "O Allāh's Messenger, how does the revelation come to you"? He answered,

(أحياناً يأتيه مثل صاحبة الجرس، وهو أشدُّ علىِي، فيفصم عني وقد وعيت عنه ما قال.  
وأحياناً يعملي لي الملك رجلاً فيكلمني، فأشعر ما يقول).

"Sometimes it comes to me as the ringing of a bell; and after it has ceased, I recall whatever he [Angel Jibrīl] said. This kind is the most painful for me. At times it is the angel who speaks to me as a man, and I grasp whatever he says". (*sahih Bukhāri*: 2; *sahih Muslim* : 2333).

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1- Cf. p. 167.

2- Cf. P. 155.

## 2.1 Rule concerning the belief in Divine Books and the proofs thereof:

### What are the Books?

The word '*kutub*', the plural form of '*kitāb*', is the verbal noun of '*kataba-yaktubu*', meaning: to write something. The linguistic usage of the word was later expanded to include the written material itself. The word '*kitāb*' initially was used to denote a sheet of paper and whatever is written on it. Thus, we read in the Glorious Qur'ān:

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ أَفَلَا لِكَيْتَ بِأَن تُنزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ﴾

**The people of the Book ask you to bring down to them a book from heaven.** (*al-Nisā'*: 153), i.e. a sheet of paper with something written on it.

The Books being referred to in this chapter are those scriptures and scrolls that contained the Words of Allāh, which He has revealed to His Messengers. These consist of what He originally sent in a book form, such as the Torah, and that which He revealed verbally through an angel but was later documented, as was the case with the other divine Books.

### Rule concerning the belief in the Books

Believing in all Books revealed by Allāh to His Messengers is an important pillar of Faith and a major principle of Islam, without which one cannot become a believer. There are proofs of this in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَالَّذِي أَنزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَن يَكُفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَكِكَيْهِ وَكِتَابِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ هَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ﴾

O you the faithful, believe in Allāh and His Messenger [Muhammad ﷺ] and the Book that He sent down upon His Messenger and the Book which He sent down before. And whoever disbelieves in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day has indeed gone far astray. (al-Nisā'; 136).

In this verse Allāh commanded his servants, the faithful to abide by all laws of Faith, including the branches and pillars thereof. Thus, He ordered them to believe in Him, His Messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ), the Book –i.e. the Qur’ān– that He sent down upon His Messenger, and that which He sent down before, which comprises all the previous Books like the Torah, the *Injīl*<sup>(1)</sup> and the *Zabūr*<sup>(2)</sup>. Furthermore, He declared at the end of the verse whoever disbelieves in any of the pillars of Faith as a truly far straying person who has deviated from the straight path. Believing in the Books revealed by Allāh is, of course, one of those mentioned pillars of Faith. Allāh says further,

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1- Allāh's revelation to his Prophet, 'Isā (Jesus) -may the peace of Allāh be upon him- is called *Injīl*, which is commonly rendered in English as "Gospel". (Translator)

2- *Zabūr* is the name Allāh gave to the Book He revealed to His Prophet, Dawūd (David ﷺ). The biblical Book of Psalms usually rendered in Arabic as '*Sūf al-Mazāmūr*' does not precisely represent Allāh's revelation to him. (Translator)

﴿ لَيْسَ الْبَرُّ أَن تُوَلُوا دُجُونَكُمْ فِي كُلِّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبَرَّ مَنْ عَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمُكَبِّكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالْيَتَّمَنَ ﴾.

Righteousneess is not that you [merely] turn your faces toward the east or the west, but righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allāh, the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the Prophets... (al-Baqarah: 177).

Here, He stated that real righteousness manifests itself in one's belief in those pillars of Faith, as well as in practicing the virtues that were subsequently mentioned in the verse. Allāh mentioned 'believing in the Book' as a pillar of Faith. The term 'Book' in this verse, according to Ibn Kathīr, is a generic noun embodying all the heavenly revealed books, up till the time they were finally sealed with the coming of the Qur'ān, the noblest of all the Scriptures and the watcher over them<sup>(1)</sup>.

As a way of establishing the belief in all divine Books, Allāh ordered His servants, the faithful, to address the People of the Book<sup>(2)</sup> in the following tone,

﴿ قُولُوا إِيمَانُكُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزَلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنزَلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزَلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَإِن تَتَّبِعُ وَسَعْيَهُمْ وَلَا إِسْبَاطَهُمْ وَمَا أُوتُقَ مُوسَى وَعِيسَى وَمَا أُوتُقَ الْبَشَّارُونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا تَفَرَّقُ بَيْنَ أَهْدِيَهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾.

Say, 'We believe in Allāh and that which was sent down to us, and that which was sent down to Ibrāhīm [Abraham], Ismā'īl [Ishmael], Ishāq [Isaac], Ya'qūb [Jacob] and the Descendants<sup>(3)</sup>, and that which was given to Mūsa [Moses] and 'Isa [Jesus], and

1- *Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr* vol. i, p. 297.

2- The Jews and the Christians. (Translator)

3- i.e. the descendants of Ya'qūb (Jacob or Israel).

**that which was given to the Prophets by their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit as Muslims'.** (al-Baqarah: 136).

This verse mentions the believers' faith regarding what Allāh has sent down to them through His Messenger (ﷺ), what He had revealed to those prominent Prophets mentioned in the verse, as well as His revelation to all other Prophets as a whole. Furthermore, the verse points out that the believers do not discriminate between the Messengers of Allāh as far as their faith in the Messengers' missions is concerned. The verse has thus contained belief in all Messengers and in the books revealed to them, just as there are many other verses of the Glorious Qur'ān referring to this as well.

The *Sunnah* similarly attests to the necessity of believing in the divine Books, and declares such as a pillar of Faith. This is evident in the *hadīth* of Jibril (ﷺ), when he asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about the pillars of Faith, and Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), in his response, mentioned believing in the Books as one of those pillars. This *hadīth* has been quoted earlier, and we see no need to repeat it here<sup>(1)</sup>.

It is, therefore, established that believing in the divine Books, all without exception, is an obligation. Similarly, one should believe in them as revelations from Allāh, sent down to His Messengers with truth, guidance and light. Moreover, he should see whoever disbelieves in them or denies any part thereof as an unbeliever, and no more as a Muslim.

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I- Please see p. 155.

## The benefits of believing in the Divine Books

Believing in Books revealed by Allāh has many great impacts on the believer. These include:

1- Being grateful to Allāh (ﷻ) for the kindness and care He has for His creatures, which have resulted in sending down books that contain guidance for them to their worldly and heavenly benefits and interest.

2- Manifestation of Allāh's wisdom; having prescribed in those Books laws that are suitable for every nation. Moreover, the laws of the Glorious Qur'ān, being the seal of the Books, conform to all ages, and are relevant in any place until the Day of Resurrection.

3- Affirmation of the talking/speaking attribute as an unquestionable quality for Allāh (ﷻ), as well as believing in the uniqueness of His speech. It is not comparable to the speech or words of His creation, who, equally, lack the potency to produce the like of His words.

## 2.2 The method of believing in the Divine Books

Believing in Books revealed by Allāh consists of many aspects, which, according to many available proofs, are indispensable for any one who wants to affirm his/her faith regarding this important pillar of Faith. These are:

1- Believing conclusively that the Books were all sent down from Allāh (ﷻ). That they are really His words, not that of anyone else, and that He actually uttered their contents as exactly as He willed and in a manner He has chosen. Allāh Himself has said,

الله لا إله إلا هو الحي القيوم ۝ فَزَلَّ عَلَيْكَ الْكَبَبُ بِالْحَقِّ مُصْبِدًا لِمَا يَعْنِي يَدِيهِ  
وَأَزَلَّ الْتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ۝ مِنْ قَبْلِ هَذِهِ لِتَأْسِيسِ وَأَزَلَّ الْفُرْقَانَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّا يَعْلَمُ مَا  
لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو أَنْتَقامَرٍ ۝

Allāh, none has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever-living, Who sustains and protects all that exists. He has revealed to you [Muhammad] the Book in truth, confirming that which was [revealed] before it, and He revealed the *Torah* and the *Injīl*. Before, as guidance for mankind, and He sent down the Criterion [i.e. the Qur'ān]. Indeed those who disbelieve in the revelations of Allāh shall have a severe punishment. And Allāh is Almighty, Owner of Retribution. (Āl-`Imrān: 2-4).

Here, Allāh informed us that He did reveal those books mentioned in the verse, the Torah, the *Injil* and the Qur'ān from Himself; an indication that they are His words, originated from Him alone and not from any other being. Thus, He concluded the verse by threatening to inflict stern punishment on whoever disbelieves in his revelations.

Allāh also said concerning the Torah,

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا التُّورَةَ فِيهَا هُدًىٰ وَوُرُّ<sup>ۚ</sup>  
Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light.  
(al- Mā'idah; 44)

Allāh (ﷻ) disclosed here that the Torah was from Him, and so were the guidance and light contained therein. As He informs us of the Jews in another context, He declares the Torah as part of His words. He says,

﴿فَأَنْظَمُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُ الْكُفَّارُ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّوْلَمْ بِخَرْفُونَةَ، مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوا﴾

Do you [O believers] covet that they would believe in your religion, while a party of them used to hear the Words of Allāh and then distort it after they had understood it. (al-Baqarah: 75).

The Torah was the words of Allāh that the Jews, according to this verse, heard and then distorted. This view has been expressed by al-Suddi, Ibn Zaid and many other scholars of the Qur'ānic exegesis (*Tafsir*). Concerning the *Injīl*, Allāh also said,

﴿وَلِيَحْكُمُ أَهْلُ الْإِغْرِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ﴾

Let the people of the *Injīl* judge by what Allāh has revealed therein. (al-Mā'idah: 47). That is the 'Dos' and 'Don'ts', which are, definitely, part of the words of Allāh.

He also says of the Glorious Qur'ān,

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُ أَنْتَمْ فَهُمْ فَضَلَّلُوكُمْ مِّنَ الدُّنْيَا حَكِيمٌ خَيْرٌ﴾

Alif -Lām- Rā<sup>(1)</sup>. [This is] a Book whose verses are perfected and then presented in detail, from [One Who is] All-Wise, Well-Acquainted [with all things]. (Hūd: 1).

In another verse, Allāh addressed His Messenger (ﷺ) saying,

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَكَفِيلٌ أَفَرَأَيْتَ مِنْ لِذَنِ حَكِيمٌ عَلَيْهِ﴾

And indeed, you receive the Qur'ān from [One Who is] All-Wise All-Knowing. (al-Naml: 6).

He also said,

I- These letters are part of the miracle of the Qur'ān; none but Allāh alone knows their meaning. (Translator)

﴿ قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْمَدْنِينَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ﴾

Say, *Rūh al-Quds* (Angel Jibrīl) has brought it [the Qur'ān] down from your Lord. (al-Nahl: 102).

﴿ وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُتَكَبِّرِ كَمَا تَجَارُكَ فَأَخْرِجْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعْ كَلْمَنَ اللَّهِ ﴾

And if anyone among the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the Words of Allāh. (al-Tawbah: 6).

It is this Qur'ān sent down by Allāh upon His Messenger (ﷺ), and nothing else, that the polytheists have been ordered to listen to; hence, the Qur'ān is certainly words of Allāh.

2- Believing that the Books have invited people to worship Allāh alone, and that they are sources of goodness, guidance and light. Allāh says,

﴿ مَا كَانَ لِكَنْزٍ أَنْ يُرِيكُهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابُ وَالْحُكْمُ وَالشُّفُوْرَ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ إِلَيْكُمْ كُوْنُوا عِبَادِيْ مِنْ دُّنْيَنِ اللَّهِ ﴾

It is not for a human being that Allāh should give him the Book, knowledge of the law of religion, and Prophethood, and then he would say to the people, 'Be servants to me rather than to Allāh'. (Al-'Imrān: 79).

Here, Allāh explained that it is unbecoming that a human being, to whom Allāh has given His Scripture, understanding of His laws and Prophethood, should then ask people to take him as a deity instead of Him. The reason being that all the Books revealed by Allāh have enjoined the worship of Him alone.

While explaining that His Books brought truth and guidance to mankind, Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقاً لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ ﴾ مِنْ قَبْلٍ  
هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ ﴾

He has revealed to you [Muhammad] the Book in truth, confirming that which was [revealed] before it, and He revealed the Torah and the *Injil*. Before, as guidance for mankind. (Al-‘Imrān; 3, 4).

﴿كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّنَ مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ  
الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ﴾

Mankind was one community [of one religion before their deviation]; then Allāh sent Prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He sent down with them the Book in truth. (al-Baqarah: 213).

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا الْتَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ﴾

Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. (al-Mā’idah: 44).

﴿وَآتَيْنَاهُ إِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ﴾

And We gave him [Jesus] the *Injil*, in which was guidance and light. (al-Mā’idah: 46).

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبُشِّرَتِي مِنَ الْهُدَى  
وَالْفُرْقَانِ﴾

The month of Ramadān in which was revealed the Qur’ān, as guidance for mankind and clear proofs of guidance and the criterion. (al-Baqarah: 185).

In addition to other verses of the Qur’ān, which imply that the Books of Allāh (ﷻ) have really brought from Him guidance and light.

3- Believing that the Books of Allāh confirm one another, and as such, no contradiction exists between them. Allāh says concerning the Glorious Qur'ān,

﴿وَنَزَّلَنَا إِلَيْكُمْ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقاً لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَهُدًىٰ وَرَحْمَةًٌ لِّلنَّاسِ﴾

And We have sent down to you [Muhammad] the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a Watcher over it. (al-Mā'idah: 48).

While He also said of the *Injīl*,

﴿وَنَاهَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ أَنْ يُخْبِلَ فِيهِ هُدًىٰ وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقاً لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرِثَةِ﴾

And We gave him [Jesus] the *Injīl*, in which was guidance and light, and confirming that which preceded it of the Torah. (al-Mā'idah: 46).

We must therefore believe in this, and hold firmly that the Books of Allāh are free from contradiction or inconsistency. That being one of the outstanding characteristics, which distinguish the Books of Allāh from the works of created beings, and His Word from that of His creatures. Anything written by a created being usually contains flaws, shortcomings and discrepancies; hence, Allāh says while describing the Glorious Qur'ān,

﴿وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوْجَدُوا فِيهِ أَخْيَالَهُ كَثِيرًا﴾

**Had it been from [anyone] other than Allāh, they would surely have found therein many contradictions.** (al-Nisā': 82).

4- Believing in those Books of Allāh, which He has specifically named for us. One should accept as true whatever Allāh or His Messenger have said concerning them. These books are:

(i) **The Torab;** the Book Allāh revealed to Mūsa (ﷺ). Allāh says,

﴿ وَلَقَدْ مَلَكَ مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ إِذْ نَعْدَ مَا أَهْلَكَ الْقُرُوبَةَ الْأُولَى بِصَاحِبِ الْكِتَابِ ﴾  
And We gave the Book to Mūsa after we had destroyed the generations of old, as insights for the people. (al-Qaṣāṣ: 43).

In the lengthy *hadīth* of Intercession (*al-Shafā'ah*)<sup>(1)</sup>, related by both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) was reported to have said,

(... فَيَأْتُونَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فَيَقُولُ: لَسْتُ هُنَاكُمْ وَيَدْكُرُ حَطَبَتِهِ الَّتِي أَصَابَهَا وَلَكِنَّ أَنْتُمْ مُوسَى  
عَبْدًا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ التُّورَةَ وَكَلَمَهُ تَكْلِيمًا).

"Then, [on the Day of Resurrection] people will come to Ibrāhīm, who will say, 'I am not fit for that -and he would mention the sin he had committed- but you should go to Mūsa, whom Allāh gave the Torah and spoke to directly'." (Bukhārī: 7410; Muslim: 193).

Allāh revealed to Musa the Torah, written on some tablets. He says,

﴿ وَكَتَبَ لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَاحِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ﴾.

And We wrote for him on the tablets lessons from all things and an explanation for all things. (al-A'rāf: 145).

Ibn 'Abbās said, "i.e. the tablets of the Torah". According to Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) narrated part of a debate between Prophets Ādām and Mūsa (عليهما السلام) as follows:

(.. قَالَ لَهُ آدَمُ: يَا مُوسَى اصْطَفَاكَ اللَّهُ بِكَلَامِهِ وَخَطَ لَكَ التُّورَةَ بِيَدِهِ).

"Ādām said, 'O Mūsa, Allāh favoured you by talking [directly] to you, and He wrote for you the Torah with His own Hand'. (Bukhārī: 6614; Muslim: 2652<sup>(2)</sup>).

1- i.e. on the Day of Resurrection. (Translator)

2- Both Bukhārī and Muslim narrated this *hadīth* through many channels.

The Torah was the most important of all the Books revealed to the Children of Israel, and it contained details of their law and judgements. Although the Torah was originally the Book revealed to Mūsa (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), all the Prophets sent to the Children of Israel after Mūsa (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) have also acted in accordance with its laws. Allāh says,

﴿إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا التُّورَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا الْأَئِمَّةُ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالْأَرْبَابُونَ وَالْأَخْبَارُ بِمَا أَسْتَعْفِفُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شَهِداً﴾

Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The Prophets who submitted [to Allāh] judged for the Jews by its standard, as did the rabbis and learned authorities [among the Jews], for they were entrusted with the protection of the Book of Allāh, and they were witnesses thereto. (al-Mā'idah: 44).

However, Allāh informed us in His book how the Jews have distorted and altered the Torah, as we shall elaborate more on this in the next topic, if Allāh so wills.

## (ii) The Injīl

*Al-injīl* is the Book Allāh sent to ‘Isa the son of Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary). (عليهما السلام). Allāh says,

﴿وَقَبَّلَنَا عَلَىٰ مَا تَرَكُوكُمْ يَعْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَصْدِيقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التُّورَةِ وَمَا نَهَىٰ إِلَّا يُخْبِلُ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمَصْدِيقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التُّورَةِ وَهُدًى وَمُوَعِّظَةٌ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

And in their footsteps We sent ‘Isa (Jesus) the son of Maryam confirming the Torah which came before him; and We gave him the *Injīl*, in which was guidance and light and confirming that which preceded it of the Torah, as guidance and admonition for the pious. (al-Mā'idah: 46).

As it is evident in the above verse, Allāh revealed the *Injīl* to confirm and endorse what is in the Torah which preceded it. Hence, according to some scholars<sup>(1)</sup>, the area of difference between the Torah and the *Injīl* is limited to certain few rules, which had been subject of disagreement among them. In a Qur'ānic verse, Al-Masīḥ (i.e. Prophet 'Isā -Jesus- ﷺ) himself is quoted as having said to the Children of Israel,

﴿وَلَأَخْرُجَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِمَ عَلَيْكُمْ﴾

**And [I have come] to make lawful for you part of what was forbidden to you.** (Āl-'Imrān: 50).

Allāh also disclosed in the Qur'ān that both the Torah and the *Injīl* have clearly heralded the coming of our Prophet, Muhammad (ﷺ). Allāh says,

﴿الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ الَّذِي يَجْدُوْكُمْ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التُّورَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ﴾

**Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who they find mentioned in the Torah and the *Injīl* that are with them.** (al-'A'rāf: 157).

Just as the Torah, the *Injīl* also suffered distortion. We are going to discuss this further in the coming topic, with the grace of Allāh.

### (iii) *Zabūr*

The Book sent to Dawūd (David) ﷺ is called *Zabūr*. Allāh says,

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I- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, vol. ii, p. 36.

وَإِنَّا دَعَوْدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٣﴾

**And to Dawūd We gave Zabūr.** (al-Nisā': 163).. Qatādah, a renowned Muslim scholar, commented on the meaning of this verse saying, "We used to hear that it [the Zabūr] was a supplication Allāh taught Dawūd, a sort of praising Allāh and glorifying Him; it consisted of no rules of lawful and unlawful, no obligations, limits or legally stipulated punishment".

(iv) **The Scriptures of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and Mūsā (Moses),** which have been mentioned twice in the Qur'ān as follows:

Allāh says in *Surah al-Najm* (Chapter 53),

﴿أَلمْ لَمْ يَرَأْ يَسَا فِي صُحْفِ مُوسَى ۚ ﴾٣٦﴿ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ۚ ﴾٣٧﴿ أَلَا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنْ رَحْمَنِنَا ۚ ﴾٣٨﴾

Or has he not been informed of what was in the Scriptures of Mūsa. And Ibrāhīm who fulfilled [his obligations]. That no laden person shall bear the load [sins] of another. And that man has only that for which he makes effort. (al-Najm: 36-39).

He has also said in *Surah al-A'�ā* (Chapter 87),

﴿فَمَنْ أَفْلَحَ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۚ ﴾١٤﴿ وَذَكَرَ أَنَّهُ زَيْدٌ فَصَلَّى ۚ ﴾١٥﴿ إِنَّ تُؤْمِنُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ۖ ﴾١٦﴿ وَالآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ ۚ ﴾١٧﴿ وَأَنْهُمْ ۚ ﴾١٨﴿ إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحْفِ الْأَوَّلِ ۚ ﴾١٩﴿ صُحْفُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى ۚ ﴾٢٠﴾

Indeed, he has prospered; who purifies himself. And remembers the name of his Lord and prays [i.e. performs *salāh*]. Nay, you prefer the life of this world. While the Hereafter is better and more lasting. Truly, this is in the Scriptures of the earliest [revelation]. The Scriptures of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā. (al-A'�ā: 14-19).

Here, Allāh disclosed part of His revelation as contained in those Scriptures He revealed upon two of His Messengers, Ibrāhīm and Mūsā. (عليهما السلام). The knowledge of all things belongs to Allāh.

#### (v) The Glorious Qur'ān

The Qur'ān is that Book Allāh revealed upon our Prophet, Muḥammad (ﷺ), to confirm and watch over the previous Books. The Glorious Qur'ān is Allāh's final revelation, and the most honourable, most perfect of all His Scriptures. It has also abrogated laws of the past Scriptures; its mission is general, meant for the entire humankind and *jinn*. Allāh says,

﴿ وَنَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَمَهِينًا عَلَيْهِ ﴾

And We have sent down to you [Muhammad] the Book in truth, as a confirmation and watcher over the Books that preceded it. (al-Mā'idah: 48). Watching over those Books implies being witness and judge over them.

﴿ قُلْ أَئِ شَفَاعَةٌ أَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةٍ فَلِلَّهِ شَهِيدٌ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَبِئْنَكُمْ وَأُوحِيَ إِلَى هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ لِأَنذِرَكُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ مِنْ بَلَغَ ﴾

Say, 'What is most weighty in testimony'? Say, 'Allāh is Witness between me and you. And this Qur'ān was sent to me that, with it, I may warn you and whomever it may reach'. (al-An'ām: 19).

﴿ بَارَكَ اللَّهُ الرَّحْمَنُ نَزَّلَ الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ نُذِيرًا ﴾

Blessed be He [Allāh] Who sent down the Criterion [The Qur'ān] upon His servant that he may be to the worlds a warner. (al-Furqān: 1). Aside from the appellation 'the Qur'ān', this Book has many other names, of which the most famous are:

- *al-Furqān* (The Criterion),
- *al-Kitāb* (The Book),
- *al-Tanzīl* (The Revelation), and
- *al-Dhikr* (The Reminder).

Our faith in the aforementioned Books (i-v) should be in accordance with the information we have in the religious texts concerning their names and to whom they have been revealed. We should also believe in what Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) have told us regarding either the Books themselves, or stories of the people to whom they were sent.

5- Believing strongly that the Glorious Qur'ān has abrogated all other Books or Scriptures, which Allāh previously revealed to His Messengers. It is not allowed, after the Qur'ān has been revealed, that anyone of humankind and *jinn*; people of the past Scriptures and others alike, should worship Allāh or seek justice through something different from this Qur'ān. Proofs in the Book of Allāh and *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ) on this are many. Allāh says,

﴿بَارَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ لِتَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ نُورًا﴾

Blessed be He [Allāh] Who sent down the Criterion [The Qur'ān] upon His servant that he may be to the worlds a warner. (*al-Furqān*: 1).

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُكَ�ذِبُ قَدْ جَاءَكُم مَّنْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِّا كُنْتُمْ تَخْفِيُونَ  
وَمِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْقُلُونَ عَنْ كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ ثُورٌ  
وَكَثِيرٌ مُّبَيِّنٌ ﴿١٥﴾ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنْ أَتَىٰ بِرَحْمَةِ رَسُولِهِ سُبُّلَ السَّلَامِ  
وَيُخْرِجُهُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلْمَاتِ إِلَىَ النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَىَ صِرَاطِ  
الْمُسْتَقِيمِ﴾

O people of the Book, there has come to you Our Messenger making clear to you much of what you used to hide of the Book

and overlooking much. There has come to you from Allāh a light and a clear Book. By which Allāh guides those who pursue His pleasure to the ways of peace, and brings them out from darkness into the light by His Permission, and guides them to a straight path. (al-Mā'idah: 15, 16).

Allāh also directed His Messenger to make this Qur'ān the basis for his judgment between the people of the Book. He says,

فَاجْحِدُوكُمْ يَعْنَمُونِي أَرْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَنْجِعُ أَهْوَاءُهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكُمْ مِّنَ الْحَقِّ ﴿٤٨﴾

So judge between them by what Allāh has revealed, and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth. (al-Mā'idah: 48).

وَإِنْ أَخْحَدُوكُمْ يَعْنَمُونِي أَرْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَنْجِعُ أَهْوَاءُهُمْ وَأَخْذِرُهُمْ أَنْ يَقْتَلُوكُمْ عَنْ بَعْضِ  
مَا أَرْزَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ﴿٤٩﴾

And judge between them by what Allāh has revealed and do not follow their inclinations. And beware of them, lest they tempt you away from some of what Allāh has revealed to you. (al-Mā'idah: 49).

A proof from the *Sunnah* in this regard comes in the body of a *hadīth* narrated by Jābir bin 'Abdullah (رضي الله عنهما), 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) came to the Prophet (ﷺ) with a book he had received from a follower of the Past Scriptures (i.e. a Jew or a Christian) and read it to him. The Prophet got angry and said,

أَمْتَهِرُ كُونُ فِيهَا يَا ابْنَ الْخَطَابِ! وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَقَدْ جَتَّحْكُمْ بِهَا بِيَضَاءِ نَقِيَّةٍ، لَا تَسْأَلُوهُمْ  
عَنْ شَيْءٍ، فَيَخْبِرُوكُمْ بِعِنْدِ فَتَكَلِّبُوا بِهِ، أَوْ بِيَاطِلْ فَتَصْدِقُوهُ، وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَوْ أَنْ مُوسَى  
كَانَ حَيًّا، مَا وَسَعَهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَتَعَنَّ.

Are you all confused about my mission, oh you [‘Umar] bin al-Khaṭṭāb! By Him in whose Hand is my life, I have brought it to

you in a crystal-clear form. Do not ask them anything [concerning your religion], lest they tell you a truth and you [erroneously] deny it, or they fabricate a lie but you [mistakenly] believe in it. By Him in whose Hand is my life, If [Prophet] Mūsa (ﷺ) were to live today, he would have no alternative but to follow me. This *hadīth* is of *hasan* (fairly sound) grade, considering all the chains of transmission<sup>(1)</sup>.

Thus, we have explained the necessary belief concerning the Books of Allāh as a whole. A more detailed discussion regarding what one should believe regarding the Glorious Qur'ān in particular is expected to follow under a separate heading, if Allāh so wills.

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I- Related by Ahmād, al-Bazzār, al-Baihaqī and others, cf. *Musnād Ahmād*; vol. iii, p. 387; *Kashf al-Āstār*; 134; *Shu'ab al-Imān*; 177.

### 2.3 The distortion of the Torah, the *Injil* and some other divine Books excluding the Qur'ān.

#### The People of the Book and distortion of the words of Allāh

Allāh (ﷻ) has spoken of the distortion, alteration and misrepresentation suffered by His Books at the hands of the People of the past Scriptures. As for the Jews, Allāh says in the Glorious Qur'ān,

﴿أَفَنَظَمُونَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوا كُلُّمَا وَمَا كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْتَعْوِنُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُونَهُ  
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ﴾.

**Do you [O believers] covet that they would believe in your religion, while a party of them used to hear the Words of Allāh and then distort it (deliberately) after they had understood it. (al-Baqarah: 75).**

﴿فَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُخْرِجُونَ الْكِتَمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ﴾.

**Among the Jews are those who distort words from their contexts. (al-Nisā': 46).**

And concerning the Christians, Allāh has also said,

﴿وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوا إِنَّا نَصْرَقُ أَحَدَنَا بِمَا فَعَلَهُمْ فَلَمَّا حَطَّ الظَّاهِرَةُ  
بِهِمْ فَأَغْرَيْنَا بِيَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابَ وَالْبَقْسَطَةَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَسُوفَ يَعْلَمُنَّ مَا  
كَانُوا يَفْسَدُونَ ﴿٦﴾ يَكْأَلُ الْكِتَابَ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ رَّسُولِنَا يُبَيِّنُ  
لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفِونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْلَمُونَ عَنْ كَثِيرٍ﴾.

**And from those who say, 'We are Christians' we took their covenant, but they forgot [and abandoned<sup>(1)</sup>] a portion of that of**

I- Al-Sa'di, *Tafsir al-Karim al-Rahmān*, p. 188. (Translator)

which they were warned. So We stirred up enmity and hatred among them until the Day of Resurrection. And Allāh is going to inform them about what they used to do. O people of the Book, there has come to you Our Messenger making clear to you much of what you used to hide of the Book and overlooking much. (al-Mā'idah: 14, 15).

These verses are witnesses to the fact that the Jews and the Christians have distorted the Books revealed to them. Their distortion of those Books was sometimes by adding something to their contents and at times by removing something from it. As regards the former Allāh says,

﴿فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَخْتَبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعْلَوْنَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَسْتَرُوا بِهِ  
ثُمَّ إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَوَيْلٌ لَّهُمْ مِّمَّا كَنْبَتَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَفَوَيْلٌ لَّهُمْ مِّمَّا يَكْبِرُونَ﴾.

So woe to those who write the 'book' with their own hands, then say, 'This is from Allāh', in order to exchange it for a miserable price. Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn. (al-Baqarah: 79).

Concerning their role in omitting part of what Allāh has revealed in His Books, He says,

﴿يَنَاهَلُ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُكُمْ بِتِبْيَانِ كُلِّمَا كَنْبَثَتْ  
مُخْفُوتَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ﴾.

O people of the Book, there has come to you Our Messenger making clear to you much of what you used to hide of the Book. (al-Mā'idah: 15).

فَقُلْ مَنْ أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَبَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ مُوسَىٰ وَهُدًى لِلنَّاسِ  
مَنْ يَعْمَلُونَهُ فَرَاطِيسْ تَبَدُّوْهُمَا  
وَخَفْفُونَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٩١﴾

Say, 'Who sent down the Book that Mūsa brought; a light and guidance for the people. You [Jews] make it into [separate] sheets, disclosing [some of] it and concealing much'. (al-Anām: 91).

### The distortion of the Torah and the *Injīl*, and proofs of this.

Having mentioned the distortion of Books revealed to the people of the Book in general, here we are going to concentrate on proofs relating specifically to the distortion of both the Torah and the *Injīl*.

As for the Torah, the proofs thereof include:

﴿فَلَمَنْ أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ مُوسَى وَهُدًى لِلنَّارِ مَنْ جَعَلَهُنَّ مُجْرِمِينَ فَرَاطِبَسْ تَبَدُّلُهَا وَخَفَوْنَ كَثِيرًا وَعَلِمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ قَاعِمُوا إِنَّمَا لَا يَأْتِيُكُمْ مِنْ أَنَّهُ شَفَعَ ذَرَهُمْ فِي حَوْضِهِمْ يَكْعَبُونَ﴾  
Say, 'Who sent down the Book that Mūsā brought; a light and guidance for the people. You [Jews] make it into [separate] sheets, disclosing [some of] it and concealing much', and you<sup>(1)</sup> were taught that which neither you nor your fathers knew. Say, 'Allāh [revealed it]', then leave them in their vain discussion, amusing themselves. (al-An'ām: 91).

That is to say, "You [Jews] transfer the contents of that Book brought by Mūsā onto pieces of paper, to facilitate what you intend of distortion and misrepresentation, and to conceal what is mentioned in that Book, of the attributes of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)".

Allāh also said,

﴿أَفَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ رَوْمَادَ الْكُمْ وَهَذَا كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَخْرُفُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقْلُوهُ﴾

Do you [O believers] covet that they would believe in your religion, while a party of them used to hear the Words of Allāh and then distort it after they had understood it. (al-Baqarah: 75).

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I- i.e. the Jews, or the Muslims who are taught by the Glorious Qur'aan. (Translator)

Al-Suddi, a prominent Muslim scholar, said, "That was the Torah; they distorted it". Another scholar, Ibn Zayd further says, "They twist the Torah that Allāh has revealed for them; they make the lawful therein unlawful and the unlawful lawful. They also misrepresent the truth therein as falsehood and falsehood as the truth".

As regards the *Injil*, here is what Allāh told us in His Book

﴿وَمِنَ الْجِبِرِيلَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْدَقُ أَحَدًا مِّنْكُمْ فَلَمَّا حَظِيَّا بِمَا دُشِّنُوا  
بِهِ فَأَغْرَيْنَا بِيَنْهُمُ الْعِذَابَ وَالْمُغْصَبَةَ إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَسُوقَ يَنْتَهِيُّهُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ  
كَيْفَ لَهُمْ كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴾١٤﴾ يَأْهُلُ الْكِتَابَ مَذْكُورٌ مِّنْهُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ  
لَهُمْ كَيْنَدِرًا وَمَا كَانُوكُمْ تُخْفِونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْقُلُونَ عَنْ كَثِيرٍ ﴾١٥﴾

And from those who say, 'We are Christians' we took their covenant, but they forgot [and abandoned<sup>(1)</sup>] a portion of that of which they were warned. Therefore, We stirred up enmity and hatred among them until the Day of Resurrection. And Allāh is going to inform them about what they used to do. O people of the Book, there has come to you Our Messenger making clear to you much of what you used to hide of the Book and overlooking much. (al-Mā'idah: 14, 15).

According to some scholars of the Qur'anic exegesis, the verse no 15 as quoted above indicates that the Messenger (ﷺ) uncovered what the Jews distorted, changed, misinterpreted or fabricated as a lie against Allāh, but still left much of their manipulation undisclosed, since there was no need to expose that<sup>(2)</sup>.

1- Al-Sa'di, *Tafsīr al-Karīm al-Rahmān*, p. 188. (Translator)

2- Ibn Kathir, *al-Tafsīr* vol. iii, p. 63.

All the above quoted verses point to the fact that the Torah and the *Injil* were changed and distorted; hence, Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed on this.

### **The Glorious Qur'ān is free from distortion & proofs of how Allāh has preserved it.**

The Glorious Qur'ān is free from corruption and distortion suffered by the former Scriptures. This has been the work of Allāh who preserved and safeguarded this Qur'ān. He says accordingly,

إِنَّمَا نُنَزِّلُ الْكِتَابَ وَإِنَّمَا لَهُ حِفْظٌ ﴿١﴾

**Truly, it is We Who sent down the Reminder [i.e. the Qur'ān] and We will surely be its Guardian.** (al-Hijr: 9).

In his commentary on this verse, Imam al-Ṭabari, the well-known Muslim scholar, says, "Allāh said, 'We are, for the Qur'ān, Guardian; who protects it from either false addition to its content, or omission of any of its rulings, limits and obligations'.<sup>(1)</sup>"

Allāh informed us elsewhere in the Qur'ān that He has perfected His Book, explained it in detail, and raised it high above any falsehood. He said,

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَطَلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ. تَرْبِيلٌ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ ﴿٢﴾

**Falsehood cannot come at it, neither from before it nor from behind it; [it is] a revelation from an All-Wise, Praiseworthy [God].** (Fussilat: 42).

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1- Ibn Jarīr, *al-Tafsīr* vol. xiv p. 7.

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ بِكُلِّ خَيْرٍٖ كَفِيلٌ مِّنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ حَسِيرٍ﴾

Alif –Lām– Rā<sup>(1)</sup>. [This is] a Book whose verses are perfected and then presented in detail, from [One Who is] All-Wise, Well-Acquainted [with all things]. (Hūd: 1).

﴿لَا تُحَمِّلْ بِهِ وَلِكَلَّكَ لِتَعْجِلَ بِهِ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمِيعَهُ وَقُوَّاتُهُ﴾

Do not move your tongue with it [oh Muḥammad] to hasten with it. Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. (al-Qiyāmah: 16, 17).

These verses are proofs of Allāh's perfect protection of the letter and spirit of the Qur'ān from any alteration or modification. Starting from the time it was revealed and until He will sanction its retrieval back to Him. Allāh has taken upon Himself the duty of making this Qur'ān taught to the Prophet, to make possible its collection in his heart, to explain it to him, and make it more expounded through the *Sunnah*. After this, Allāh also selected some pious and trustworthy followers for the Prophet, who learnt this Qur'ān by heart and preserved it in written form throughout all ages and generations. The Book of Allāh thus remains intact and unadulterated; adults and children read it exactly as it has been initially revealed to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), the variety of times and cities notwithstanding.

Muslim scholars have drawn attention to an amazing clever remark regarding why it was possible for the people of the Book to

I- These letters are part of the miracle of the Qur'ān; none but Allāh alone knows their meaning. (Translator)

distort the Torah, but such distortion with regard to the Qur'ān is inconceivable. Abu 'Amr al-Dāni narrated on behalf of Abu al-Hasan al-Muntāb who said, I was once sitting with Qādi Abu Ishāq, Ismā'il bin Ishāq when someone asked him the following question: 'Why was it feasible for the people of the Torah to distort it, and wasn't for the people of the Qur'ān'? He replied, "Allāh (ﷻ) said of the people of the Torah,

﴿بِمَا أَسْتَعْفَفْتُمُوا مِنْ كِتْبِ اللَّهِ﴾

...for they were entrusted with the protection of the Book of Allāh. (al-Mā'idah: 44).

Allāh made the safety of His Book their responsibility, and thus it became possible for them to tamper with it. However, concerning the Qur'ān Allāh said instead,

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَرْزَقُ الْأَنْذِكَرَ وَلَا نَهُوكُنَّ حَفَظُونَ﴾

Truly, it is We Who sent down the Reminder [i.e. the Qur'ān] and We will surely be its Guardian. (al-Hijr: 9).

Thus, He has removed the possibility of any distortion on the part of the nation of the Qur'ān".

Abu al-Hasan al-Muntāb –the narrator– added, "I then went to Abu 'Abdullah al-muḥāmili and told him what had happened, and he remarked, 'I have never heard a statement better than this'."

## 2.4 Believing in the Glorious Qur'ān and the characteristics of such belief

### 2.4.1 Definitions of the Qur'ān, *Qudsi hadīth* and *Nabawi hadīth*, as well as the dissimilarities between the three

The Glorious Qur'ān is the word of Allāh, uttered by Him originally in a manner not exactly known to us. Allāh then sent it down as a revelation to his Messenger, and the believers have accepted that as true and are certainly convinced that the Qur'ān is truly the words of Allāh, which Angel Jibrīl heard directly from Him and then brought down to the last of His Messengers, Muḥammad (ﷺ), both in letter and spirit<sup>(1)</sup>. The Qur'ān, which has been transmitted through many recurring lines of transmission, leading thereby to certainty as regards its contents, is written on pages of the *muyhass*<sup>(2)</sup>, and safeguarded from being corrupted or distorted<sup>(3)</sup>.

The *Qudsi hadīth* is a *hadīth* narrated both in letter and spirit by the Prophet (ﷺ) from his Lord (Allāh), which has been communicated to us either via a solitary chain of transmission (*Aḥād*)

1- i.e. the utterances themselves and the meaning thereof.

2- i.e. copies of the Qur'ān.

3- *Al-Tahāwiyyah*, vol i, p. 172; al-Qattān, Maṇnā'; *Mabāḥith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Studies in the Sciences of the Qur'ān) p. 21; al-Qāsimī, Jamāl al-Dīn, *Qawā'id al-Tahdīth* (Principles of *Hadīth* narration) p. 65.

or through recurring lines of dissemination (*Mutawātir*) less in degree than that through which the Qur'ān has been transmitted<sup>(1)</sup>.

An example of the *Qudsi hadīth* is what Abū Dharr al-Gifārī, a Companion of the Prophet, narrated on behalf of the Prophet (ﷺ) who had in turn reported that Allāh (ﷻ) said,

(بِأَيْمَانِ عَبْدِيِّ إِنِّي حَرَمْتُ الظُّلْمَ عَلَى نَفْسِي وَرَجَلَتُهُ بِيَنْكُمْ مَعْرِمًا فَلَا تَظَالِمُوا).

**O my servants, I have myself refrained from doing injustice, and also proscribed that you be unjust to one another, so beware of injustice.** (*Sahīh Muslim*: 2577).

And by *Nabawi hadīth* we mean any saying, deed, silent approval or description ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ)<sup>(2)</sup>.

### The difference between the three (i.e. the Qur'ān, the *Qudsi* and the *Nabawi hadīths*)

The Qur'ān is different from both the *Qudsi* and the *Nabawi hadīths* in the sense that the mere recitation of its text is an act of worship. In addition to its inimitable composition, the like of which Allāh has even challenged mankind and *jinn* to produce, if they could. Similarly no one is allowed to touch the Qur'ān if he is ritually impure<sup>(3)</sup>, or to recite it if he is in a state of major impurity<sup>(4)</sup>. Substituting a meaning for the original wording of any portion of the

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1- Al-Qāsimī, Jamāl al-Dīn, op. cit., p. 65.

2- Al-Qāsimī, Jamāl al-Dīn, op. cit., pp. 61-62 ; Ibn 'Uthaimayn, *Mustalahu al-Hadīth* (The Hadīth Terminologies) p. 7.

3- i.e. without ablution. (Translator)

4- i.e. after sexual intercourse. (Translator)

Qur'ān is prohibited, and it is not allowed to recite anything apart from it in ṣalāh (prayer). Anyone reciting the Qur'ān would be rewarded on the basis of one merit in return for every letter, and the merit is even tenfold.

The *Qudsi ḥadīth* on the other hand is also different from the *Nabawī ḥadīth*. The former is utterly the words of Allāh, while the latter is that of His Prophet (ﷺ) both in letter and spirit. Furthermore, the *Qudsi ḥadīth* is superior to the *Nabawī ḥadīth*, in view of the supremacy of Allāh's words over the utterances of His creatures<sup>(1)</sup>.

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I- Al-Qāsimi, Jamāl al-Dīn, op. cit., pp. 65-66.

### Characteristics of the belief in the Qur'ān

Believing in the Books revealed by Allāh constitutes a major principle of Faith as mentioned earlier. In addition to all that has been said regarding the faith in the Books of Allāh, generally. The Glorious Qur'ān -having abrogated all the previous Scriptures and as a criterion over them, which Allāh has directed mankind and *jinn* to take as the basis for their acts of worship since the time it was revealed to our Prophet, Muhammad (ﷺ)- has some exceptional characteristics that are necessary for the belief in it. These are as follows:

1- To believe in the universality of its mission, and in the generality of the law it has brought for the whole of humanity and *jinn*. They cannot afford to disbelieve in the Qur'ān or worship Allāh in a way other than what He has prescribed in it. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿بَارَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ مُهِدِّدًا﴾

**Blessed be He [Allāh] Who sent down the Criterion [The Qur'ān] upon His servant that he may be to the worlds a warner.** (al-Furqān: 1).

Allāh also informs us of a statement made by His Prophet (ﷺ) thus,

﴿وَأَوْرَجَ إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ لَا يُنَزَّلُ لِأَنْذِرَكُمْ بِهِ، وَمَنْ مِنْ بَعْدِّ﴾

**This Qur'ān has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomever it reaches.** (al-An'ām: 19).

He also informs us about another statement pronounced by the *jinn*, who said,

﴿إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا فِرْدَانًا عَجَيْبًا ﴿١﴾ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْأَرْشِدِ فَعَمَّا يَوْمًا﴾

**Indeed, we have heard an amazing recitation [i.e. the Qur'ān]. It guides to the right path, and we have believed in it.** (al-Jinn: 1, 2).

2- To believe that the Glorious Qur'ān has nullified all the past Scriptures. It is forbidden for the people of the Book (Jews and Christians) and others to stick to any other law or Scripture after the Qur'ān has been revealed. No religion or act of worship is valid, nor may something be declared lawful or unlawful, except in accordance with what Allāh has mentioned in this Book. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَمَن يَتَّبِعْ عَرَفَ الْإِسْلَامَ فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ ﴾

**And whoever desires other than Islam as a religion, never will it be accepted from him.** (Āl-'Imrān: 85).

﴿ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّمَا أَرْرَدْنَا اللَّهُ ﴾

**And We have indeed sent down to you [Muhammad] the Book in truth, that you may judge between people by that which Allāh has shown you.** (al-Nisā': 105).

Similarly, we have mentioned earlier in the *hadīth* narrated by Jābir bin 'Abdullah how the Prophet (ﷻ) forbade his Companions to read Scriptures belonging to either the Jews or the Christians<sup>(1)</sup>, adding that, "By Him in whose Hand is my life, If [Prophet] Mūsa (؏) were to live today, he would have no alternative but to follow me<sup>(2)</sup>".

3- The tolerance and simplicity of the laws of the Qur'ān, in contrast to the laws brought by the previous Scriptures, which were characterized by many burdens and stern obligations for their adherents. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

1- That is when one reads those books and regards them, after the Qur'ān has been revealed, as sources of divine guidance or legislation. (Translator)

2- See p. 204.

﴿الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ الَّذِي يَحْدُوْنَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَالْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَايْهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيَحْلِلُ لَهُمُ الْطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيَنْهَا مُنْهَى عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَثَ وَيَضْعُفُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَارُهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَلُ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ﴾

Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find written [i.e. mentioned] in the Torah and the *Injīl* [that are] with them. He enjoins upon them what is right and forbids them what is wrong, and makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the foul and relieves them of their burden and the shackles<sup>(1)</sup> that used to be upon them. (*al-A'rāf*: 157).

4- The Qur'ān is the only Scripture that Allāh has guaranteed to protect from corruption regarding either the text itself or the meaning thereof. Thus, He says,

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الْكِتَابَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَفِظُونَ﴾

Truly, it is We who sent down the Reminder [i.e. the Qur'ān] and We will surely be its Guardian. (*al-Hijr*: 9).

﴿لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْكُفَّارُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ، تَرَيْلُ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ﴾

Falsehood cannot come at it, neither from before it nor from behind it; [it is] a revelation from an All-Wise, Praiseworthy [God]. (*Fussilat*: 42).

Furthermore, Allāh declared that He has taken upon Himself the explanation and elucidation of this Qur'ān in accordance with what He had intended and prescribed. He says,

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I- i.e. strict or stern obligations.

﴿إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمِيعَهُ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بِكَانَةُ فِي أَذْكُرٍ فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَاهُ فَلَيَقُعُّ فِي قَلْبِكَ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ بِكَانَةُ مُؤْمِنٍ﴾

Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. So when We have recited it [to you through Angel Jibril], then follow its recital. Then upon Us is its clarification. (al-Qiyāmah; 17-19).

The eminent Muslim scholar of *Tafsīr* (Qur'anic exegesis), Ibn Kathīr, elucidated the meaning of the last verse we have just mentioned in the following way: "That is to say, 'After you should have recited and memorized it, We shall explain and expound it to you, and also inspire you with the meaning in line with what We had intended and ordained'."

For the sake of protecting His Book, Allāh (ﷻ) prepared some leading scholars who have played this role excellently, from the days of the Prophet (ﷺ) until the present time. Those scholars not only learnt the Qur'ān by heart but, in addition, had good understanding of its meaning, acted uprightly in line with its injunctions, and authored sizable works relating to every branch of its sciences or fields. The areas covered by their academic legacy in this respect include the following:

- *Tafsīr* (Qur'anic exegesis).
- Rasm and Qirā'at (Science of the writing and recitation of the Qur'ān).
- Muḥkam and Mutashābih (The clear and the unclear).
- *Makki* and *Madani* (The Makkān and the Madinān revelation).

- *Istibḥāt al-Aḥkām* (The science of legal deduction in the Qur'ān).
- *Nāsikh and Mansūkh* (The theory of abrogation in the Qur'ān).
- *Aṣbāb al-Nuzūl* (Causes or occasions of revelation).
- *Amthāl al-Qur'ān* (The Qur'ānic proverbs).
- *Ijāz al-Qur'ān* (The inimitability or miraculous nature of the Qur'ān).
- *Gharīb al-Qur'ān* (The less-common words in the Qur'ān).
- *I'rāb al-Qur'ān* (Grammatical analysis of the Qur'ānic words), etc.

As a consequence of Allāh's preparation of those scholars to serve His Book and the related sciences, His protection of the Qur'ān materialized through the aforementioned fields. Hence, it remains today well protected, as it is being read and explained as exactly as it was originally revealed.

5- There are many aspects of inimitability in the Qur'ān, as in the other Books revealed by Allāh (ﷻ). On the whole, the Glorious Qur'ān represents the greatest miracle as well as the strongest and lasting evidence Allāh has used to support His Prophet (ﷺ) and his followers up till the Day of Resurrection. The two Sheikhs (Bukhāri and Muslim) reported on the authority of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(ما من الأنبياء نبي إلا أعطى من الآيات ما مثله آمن عليه البشر، وإنما كان الذي أرته وحشاً أرجاه الله إليّ فلأرجو أن تكون أكثرهم تابعاً يوم القيمة).

**Every Prophet was given miracles that led people to believe in him. But what I have been given is the revelation, which Allāh revealed to me. I therefore hope that my followers would outnumber those of any other Prophet on the Day of Resurrection.** (*Bukhārī*: 4981; *Muslim*: 152).

Facets of inimitability in the Qur'ān include the beauty of the compilation itself, the purity of its language and the eloquence of the method. Mankind and *jinn* were both challenged at varying degrees to produce the like of this Qur'ān or at least part of it. At the initial stage, Allāh put it to them to produce, if they could, something that would be parallel to the Qur'ān, but they totally fell short of that. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقْوِيلٌ بَلْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾ ﴿٢٧﴾ قُلْ أَتُؤْرِثُ بِحَدِيثٍ مِّثْلِهِ إِنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ ﴾ ﴿٢٨﴾

Or do they say, 'He [Muhammad] has forged it'? Nay, they do not believe. Let them produce a statement like it, if they should be truthful. (*al-Tūr*: 33, 34).

Allāh said also while reporting their inability in this regard,

﴿ قُلْ لَئِنْ أَجْمَعُتِ الْإِنْسَانُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِعِظَمِهِمْ يَتَعَصَّبُونَ ظَاهِرًا ﴾ ﴿٤٠﴾

Say, 'If mankind and *jinn* gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another'. (*al-Isrā'*: 88).

After this, Allāh called them to dare bring forth just ten similar *sūrahs* (chapters), but they also failed to do so. Allāh states,

﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ مُفْتَرَّةٌ قُلْ فَأَتُؤْمِنُ بِعَشْرِ سُورَاتٍ مُّفْتَرَّاتٍ وَآدْعُوكُمْ مِّنْ أَسْتَطْعَتْمِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾.

Or do they say, 'He invented it?' Say, 'Then bring you ten *sūrahs* like it that have been invented, and call [to your aid] whomever you can besides Allāh, if you should be truthful'. (Hūd: 13).

Then in the third time, Allāh challenged them to produce just one *sūrah*, but, as usual, they lacked the ability for this as well. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ مُفْتَرَّةٌ قُلْ فَأَتُؤْمِنُ بِسُورَةٍ مُّفْتَرَّةٍ وَآدْعُوكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾.

Or do they say, 'He invented it?' Say, 'Bring you then a *sūrah* [forged] like it, and call upon [for help] whomever you can besides Allāh, if you should be truthful'. (Yūmūs: 38).

In no other stronger term could the inimitability of the Qur'ān have been established; having mentioned the incapability of the entire creation to withstand the least degree of Allāh's challenge in this regard, and that is to simply produce nothing more than just a *sūrah* like unto the Qur'ān! Knowing that a *sūrah* of this nature may consist of just three verses; an equivalent of the shortest of the *sūrahs* of the Glorious Qur'ān.

6- Allāh (ﷻ) has explained in the Qur'ān all what humanity stands in need of, pertaining to either the worldly life or the life after death. Thus, He declared,

﴿وَزَرَّلَنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِِئْنَاهَا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَنُذِيرًا لِلْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ﴾.  
And We have sent down upon you the Book as clarification for all things, and as guidance, mercy and glad tidings for the Muslims. (al-Nāhīl: 89).

﴿مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾

Nothing have We neglected in the Book<sup>(1)</sup>. (al-An'ām: 38).

In the words of Ibn Masūd (رضي الله عنه)، "Every knowledge has been revealed in this Qur'ān; all things have been clarified for us in the Qur'ān".

7- Allāh (ﷻ) has made the Qur'ān easy for remembrance and cogitation, as one of the most important features of this Book. He says,

﴿وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهُنَّ مِنْ مُذَكَّرِينَ﴾

And We have indeed made the Qur'ān easy for remembrance, so is there any who will remember [or receive admonition]? (al-Qamar: 17).

﴿كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ مُبِينٌ لِتَذَكَّرُوا عَنِ الْجُنُونِ وَلَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَيْمَنُ﴾

[This is] a Book full of blessings, which We have sent down to you, that they might ponder over its āyahs and that people of understanding would be reminded. (Sād: 29).

Commenting on the above quoted verse (al-Qamar: 17), the famous Muslim scholar, Mujāhid said, "That is: We facilitated its recitation". Another Muslim scholar called al-Suddi gave the meaning as, "We made it easy for the [people's] tongues to recite it". Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) also said, "Had it not been that Allāh has facilitated its recitation for men, no created being would have been able to pronounce the words of Allāh<sup>(2)</sup>".

1- The 'Book' here may also mean the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lauh al-Mahfūz*) according to some *Tafsīr* scholars. (Translator)

2- *Ibn Kathir, Tafsīr* vol. viii, p. 453.

According to Tabari and some other leading scholars of the Qur'anic exegesis, the statement 'Qur'ān made easy' embodies facilitation of the word being recited. It also includes facilitation of the meaning, thereby paving the way for an easy reflection, meditation and learning lessons from the Qur'ān. This, itself, is apparent and noticeable enough in reality.

8- The Glorious Qur'ān contains the gist of the teachings of all the past Scriptures, and the basic elements of the laws of all Messengers. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَهِينًا عَلَيْهِ ﴾

And We have sent down to you [Muhammad] the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a Watcher over it. (al-Mā'idah: 48).

﴿ شَرَعْ لَكُم مِّنَ الظِّنَنِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّبَّنَا بِهِ إِنَّ رَبَّهُمْ وَمَوْسَى وَجِيسُونَ لَمْ أَفِمُوا الظِّنَنَ وَلَا نَسْفَرُ فَوْأِفِيهُ ﴾

He [Allāh] has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Nūh, and that which We have revealed to you [Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Ibrāhīm [Abraham], Mūsa [Moses] and 'Isa [Jesus] – to establish the religion and not be divided therein. (al-Shārā': 13).

9- The Qur'ān contains detailed information about the past Messengers and nations in an unprecedented magnitude. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَكُلُّ نَفْسٍ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا ثَيَّبَتْ بِهِ فَوَادِكَ ﴾

And each [story] We relate to you from the news of the [past] Messengers is that by which We make firm your heart. (Hūd: 120).

﴿ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَبْيَأِ الْقُرَىٰ نَفَضَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْهَا فَآتَمْهُ وَحْسِيدٌ﴾

That is from the news of the cities, which We relate to you; of them some are [still] standing and some are [as] a harvest [mowed down]. (Hūd: 100).

﴿كَذَلِكَ تَعْصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَبْيَأِهِ مَا فَدَ سَبِيقٌ وَقَدْ هَانَتْكَ مِنْ لَدُنَّ ذِكْرِ﴾

Thus, We relate to you [Muhammad] from the news of what has preceded. And indeed We have given you from Us a reminder [i.e. the Qur'ān]. (Tā-Hā: 99).

10- Of all the divine Books, the Glorious Qur'ān was the last to be revealed, the ultimate and the witness over all the previous Books. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿رَزَّلْ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقاً لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنْزَلَ الْتَّورَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ۝ مِنْ قَبْلٍ هُدًىٰ لِلنَّاسِ وَأَنْزَلَ الْقُرْآنَ ۝﴾

He [Allāh] has revealed to you [Muhammad] the Book in truth, confirming that which was [revealed] before it, and He revealed the Torah and the *Injīl*. Before, as guidance for mankind, and He sent down the Criterion [i.e. the Qur'ān]. (Al-'Imrān:3, 4).

﴿وَأَنْزَلَنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقاً لِمَا بَيْتَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّئاً عَلَيْهِ ۝﴾  
And We have sent down to you [Muhammad] the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a Watcher over it. (al-Mā'idah: 48).

The aforementioned are some of the characteristics of the Glorious Qur'ān, which distinguish it from other Scriptures. One's faith in the Qur'ān remains invalid until he/she believes in all of these points, both in theory and in practice. Allāh, the Sublime, knows best.

## Chapter Three: Believing in the Messengers of Allāh

This chapter consists of eleven items as follows:

- i) The rule concerning the belief in Allāh's Messengers and the proofs thereof.
- ii) Definition of the terms: 'prophet' and 'messenger', with special reference to the difference between the two.
- iii) The method of believing in Allāh's Messengers.
- iv) Our duty towards them.
- v) Messengers described by Allāh as Men of Firm Resolution ('Ulu al-'Azm).
- vi) The special qualities of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and the rights owed him by his followers. Also to be discussed here is the veracity of seeing him in a dream.
- vii) His message as the final of all divine missions; hence, no Prophet shall come after him.
- viii) The Night Journey (*Al-Isrā'*) by the Prophet (ﷺ): Facts and proofs.
- ix) The truth about the life of the Prophets (after their death).
- x) The Prophets' miracles compared to the *karamah* (charisma) of the righteous believers.
- xi) *Al-Waliyy* and *al-Wilāyah* from an Islamic viewpoint.

### 3.1 The rule concerning the belief in Allāh's Messengers and the proofs thereof

To believe in the Messengers of Allāh is a religious obligation and a major article of the Muslim Faith. Much evidence on this could be found in the Glorious Qur'ān as well as the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿لَا يَنْهَا مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّيهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ مُؤْمِنٍ بِأَنَّهُوَ مَكْتُوبٌ وَمُكْتَبٌ وَمُكْتَبٌ وَمُكْتَبٌ لَا تَنْهَى بَعْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رَسُولِهِ وَقَاتَلُوا سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَلَطَعَنَاهُ﴾

The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. Each of them has believed in Allāh, His angels, His Books and His Messengers [saying], 'We make no distinction between any of His Messengers'. And they said, 'We heard and we obeyed'... (al-Baqarah: 285).

Thus, Allāh mentioned the belief in His Messengers as one of those articles of faith in which the Prophet and the believers alike have believed. He further described their faith in those Messengers as an indivisible entity; having believed in all of them without any exception.

Stating further, the rule concerning whoever renounces the belief in His Messengers, Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَرَبِّيْدُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَقْرِئُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَرَبِّيْلُوهُنَّ نُؤْمِنُ بِعَصْرٍ وَنَسْخَرُ بِعَصْرٍ وَرَبِّيْدُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٦﴾ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَفَرُونَ حَقًا﴾

Indeed, those who disbelieve in Allāh and His Messengers and wish to separate between [the belief in] Allāh and [the belief in] His Messengers and say, 'We believe in some, but reject others',

and wish to take a course midway. They are, truly, the unbelievers... (al-Nisā': 150, 151).

Here, Allāh declared as infidels whoever disbelieves in the Messengers or discriminates between them, through believing in some and disbelieving in others. He went further to describe them as 'the real unbelievers'; an indication that their infidelity is both certain and unequivocal.

Conversely, Allāh (ﷻ) explained, in the same context, the stand of the faithful in this respect by saying,

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِأَنَّهُ رَسُولٌ وَلَا يُعْرِفُونَ بَيْنَ أَكْثَرِ فِتْنَتِهِمْ أُولَئِكَ سَبَقُنَا بِتَوْبَةِ أَجُورُهُمْ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُورًا لِرَحْمَةِ كَبِيرٍ ﴾

**But they who believe in Allāh and His Messengers and make no discrimination between any of them, to those He is going to give their rewards. And Allāh is Ever Forgiving, Most Merciful.** (al-Nisā': 152).

Allāh described them as believers in Him and in all of His Messengers without prejudicing against any of them, by believing in some and disbelieving in others.

The *Sunnah* also testifies to what has been stated in the Qur'ān that believing in the Messengers of Allāh constitutes an article of Faith. This is evident in the *hadīth* of Jibrīl as quoted earlier in this book<sup>(1)</sup>. In his response to Angel Jibrīl's question about Faith, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "[Faith means] that you believe in Allāh, His

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I- Cf. Chapter One: The Belief in Angels.

angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day<sup>(1)</sup>...". Thus, believing in Allāh's Messengers has been mentioned concurrently with the other articles of Faith in which every Muslim must believe.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was also reported to have a special supplication, which he would recite each time he prayed the non obligatory prayer of the night. The supplication reads as follows:

(اللهم لك الحمد أنت نور السماوات والأرض، ولك الحمد أنت قيم السماوات والأرض، وللك الحمد أنت رب السماوات والأرض ومن فيهن، أنت الحق، ووعدك الحق، وقولك الحق، ولقائك الحق، والجنة حق، والنار حق، والبيون حق، والمساعنة حق...).

**O Allāh! Praise be to You, You are the Light of the heavens and the earth. Praise be to You, You are the Keeper of the heavens and the earth. Praise be to You, You are the Lord of the heavens, the earth and whoever is therein. You are the Truth; Your Promise is the truth; Your Word is the truth and meeting You [on the Day of Resurrection] is the truth. Paradise is true, and so too is the Fire (Hell). The Prophets are also true, and the Hour [Resurrection] is likewise true...** (*Sahih Bukhāri*; 7499).

The Prophet (ﷺ) thus testified to the truthfulness of all the Prophets of Allāh alongside other great fundamentals of Faith mentioned in the *ḥadīth*, such as the belief in Allāh and in the existence of both Paradise and Hell, as well as in the coming of the Hour of Resurrection. Furthermore, this testimony immediately preceded the supplication and the night prayer he used to offer. These factors –combined together–

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I- See p. 155.

signify the importance of believing in Allāh's Messengers and Prophets, as far as the religion of Islam is concerned.

It is therefore an established fact that people are duty-bound to believe in the Messengers, and take that as one of the strongest pillars of Islam and a significant quality for the faithful. It is similarly incontestable that whoever disbelieves in all or any of Allāh's Messengers has become downright disbeliever, even in Allāh Himself, for having rejected such an important principle of Faith: the belief in the Messengers.

### **Benefits of believing in the Messengers**

Believing in Allāh's Messengers provides the believer with many good impacts and great benefits. These include:

1- Acknowledging Allāh's mercy and concern for His creation, as He has sent to them those honourable Messengers to guide and lead them aright.

2- Giving thanks to Him for this immense favour.

3- Loving the Messengers themselves and giving them due respect. Moreover, the believer will praise them in a befitting manner, for they are the Messengers of Allāh (ﷺ) and the cream of His servants, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, for their role in conveying Allāh's message to His creation, offering valuable advice to their adherents, and putting up with the mischief of those followers.

### 3.2 Definitions of *nabiyy* 'prophet' and *rasūl* 'messenger', and the difference between the two terms

Linguistically, the word '*nabiyy*' is a derivative of another word: '*naba'*', which means an immensely useful news or information. A saying of Allāh (ﷻ) goes thus:

﴿عَمِّ يَنْبَأُونَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

About what are they asking one another? About the great news. (al-Naba': 1, 2).

Hence, a Prophet is called '*nabiyy*', for he receives message from Allāh and disseminates the same to others. In other words, he is at both ends: the receiving and the dispatching.

Another view suggests that the word '*nabiyy*' perhaps has its origin in the word '*nabāwah*', meaning an elevated object. Having this in mind, it is then opined that the Prophets have been given this title '*Nabiyy*' in recognition of their high ranking status above all other human beings. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَرَفَعْنَاهُ مَكَانًا عَلَيْنَا﴾

And We raised him [Idrīs (Enoch)] to a lofty station. (Maryam: 57).

As for the word '*rasūl*', it is also derived from another word '*irsāl*' meaning 'to send something'. Allāh (ﷻ) has informed us in the Qur'ān of that statement ascribed to the historical *Saba'* Queen,

﴿قَوْلَيَ مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهَدْيٍ فَلَا ظَرَفَهُ يَمْرُجِعُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ﴾

But indeed, I am going to send them a present, and wait to see with what [reply] will the emissaries return. (al-Naml: 35).

Now we come to the Islamic technical meaning of both terms. Muslim scholars have expressed here different views, but the most acceptable definition is as follows:

A '*nabiyy*' (Prophet) is he whom Allāh has given, through revelation, the law which he himself shall follow, and by which he shall also command the believers to abide. A '*rasul*' (Messenger) however, is he whom Allāh has revealed to, ordering him to convey His message to those who defy His orders.

The dissimilarity between both terms lies in the fact that a 'prophet' even though is informed of Allāh's commands and prohibitions so that he may pass the same to fellow believers, his mission is nevertheless restricted to that circle, and may not be extended to cover the unbelievers. As for a 'messenger', he is sent to both the believing and the disbelieving nations; to convey Allāh's message to them and invite them to His worship.

A 'Messenger' does not necessarily bring about new law. Hence, Yūsuf (Joseph), although a Messenger, followed the religion of Ibrāhīm, (another Messenger who had come before him). Likewise, Dāwūd and Sulaimān have both stuck to the law of the Torah, even though, they were, like Mūsa (the initial recipient of the Torah), Messengers of Almighty Allāh. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ يُوسُفُ مِنْ قَبْلُ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا زِلْتُمْ فِي شَكٍ بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ بِهِ حَقًّا إِذَا  
هَلَكَ فَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ أَنْ يَعْصُكُ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ رَسُولٌ﴾

And Yūsuf had already come to you before with clear proofs, but you remained in doubt of that which he brought to you, until when he died, you said, 'Never will Allāh send a Messenger after him'. (Ghāfir: 34).

﴿إِنَّا أَوْجَحْنَا إِلَيْكَ كُلَّا أَوْجَحْنَا إِلَيْنَاهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْجَحْنَا إِلَيْكَ إِنَّهُ هِمَّ وَإِنَّمِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْطَابَاطَ وَعِيسَى وَأَبْرَوْبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَذِرُونَ وَسَلِيمَنَ وَمَا أَيْنَا دَائِرَةٌ  
رَبُورَا ﴿١٧﴾ وَرَسُولًا فَدَ قَصَصْتُهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ وَرَسُولًا لَمْ تَقْصَصْتُهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَكُلُّمَ اللَّهُ  
شُوَسَى تَكْخِلِيمَا ﴿١٨﴾﴾

We have indeed sent revelation to you [Muhammad] as We sent to Nūh and the Prophets after him. And We [also] sent revelation to Ibrāhīm, Ismā'īl, Ishāq, Ya'qūb, the Descendants<sup>(1)</sup>, 'Isā, Ayyūb, Yūnus, Hārūn and Sulaimān. And to Dawūd We gave the Zabūr. And Messengers We have already related to you their stories, and others about whom We have not related to you. And to Mūsā Allāh spoke direct. (al-Nisā': 163, 164).

A Prophet, in some cases, may also be called 'messenger'. Thus, we read in a saying of Allāh (ﷻ) that,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا يَنْجِي إِلَّا إِذَا نَفَعَ الْفَلَقُ الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أَمْرِنَّاهُ﴾  
And We did not send before you any Messenger or Prophet except that when he recited the revelation [or spoke] the Devil threw into it [some falsehood]. (al-Hajj: 52).

Here, Allāh (ﷻ) stated that both are sent by Him to convey His message; whether a Prophet or a Messenger. This implies that any Prophet -whom Allāh has ordered to invite his fellow believers to certain act- is regarded as having been sent to them with a message from Him, even though his mission is not unlimited. As for a Messenger '*rāsūl*', whose mission is unrestricted, he is sent to the entire creation, the faithful and the infidels alike.

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I- i.e. the offspring of Prophet Ya'qūb's sons.

### 3.3 The method of believing in Allāh's Messengers

Believing in Allāh's Messengers means to accept as true whatever Allāh or His Prophet (ﷺ) has said concerning them, both generally and minutely.

The general acceptance or belief in this regard signifies being resolutely convinced that Allāh (ﷻ) has raised for every nation a Messenger who invited them to worship Allāh alone without ascribing partners to Him, and to disbelieve in any other deity being worshipped besides Him. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِيبْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَاجْتَبَيْنَا الظَّاغِنَاتِ ﴾

And indeed, We have sent among every nation a Messenger, [proclaiming] Worship Allāh [alone] and avoid false objects of worship (*tāghūt*). (al-Nahl: 36).

One should also believe that the Messengers were all truthful, righteous, prudent, honourable, pious and trustworthy. And that they themselves have been rightly guided, while they also led others to the right path. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ هَذِهِ مَا وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَصَدِقَ الْمَرْسَلُونَ ﴾

**This is what the Most Merciful (Allāh) had promised, and true were the words of the Messengers.** (Yā-Sin: 52).

He said again, after mentioning many of those Prophets and Messengers,

﴿ وَمِنْ أَبْيَادِهِ دَارِرُ شَمَاءَ وَأَخْوَنَهُمْ وَاجْتَبَيْنَاهُمْ وَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ إِنَّ صَرْطَنِي مُشَتَّقِي ﴾ ۲۷  
﴿ هُدَى اللَّهُ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ﴾

And [some] among their fathers and their descendants and their brothers. And We chose them and guided them to a straight path.

**That is the guidance of Allāh, by which He guides whomever He wills of His servants.** (al-Anfāl: 87, 88).

It must be held also, that whatever they preached or practised is the plain truth and the manifest guidance. They have come with clear signs from their Lord to their people. In this regard, Allāh (ﷻ) relates what the dwellers of Paradise will say in the life to come as follows:

﴿لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلٌ إِلَيْنَا بِالْحَقِّ﴾

Certainly, the Messengers of our Lord had come with the truth. (al-A'raf: 43).

Allāh says again in another verse,

﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا إِلَيْنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ﴾

We have indeed sent our Messengers with clear evidences and sent down with them the Book and the balance [Justice], that mankind may keep up justice. (al-Hadīd: 25).

We should also see their mission as having one single origin, which is the call to the oneness of Allāh. However, details of the laws revealed to each one of them are not identical. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِنَّ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾

And We sent not before you any Messenger except that We revealed to him that, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Me [Allāh], so worship Me [alone]'. (al-Anbiyā': 25).

﴿لِكُلِّ جَمِيعِنَا مِنْكُمْ شَرِيعَةٌ وَمِنْهَا جَاءَ﴾

We prescribed to each of you a law and a clear way. (al-Mā'idah: 48).

Equally, we must hold that the Messengers have conveyed very clearly the message they were sent with, leaving no excuse thereby for the creation. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿لَعْنَهُ أَنَّهُمْ أَنْتُمُ الْأَنْجَوْنَ وَأَحَاطَ بِكُمُ الْأَيْمَنَةَ وَأَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدْنَا﴾

Till He [Allāh] sees<sup>(1)</sup> that they [the Messengers] have conveyed the Messages of their Lord. And He has encompassed all that is with them, and kept count of all things. (al-Jinn: 28).

﴿رُسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لَا يَكُونُ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ أَرْسَلْنَا﴾

Messengers as bearers of good news and warners, so that mankind will have no plea against Allāh after [the coming of] the Messengers. (al-Nisā': 165).

It is also necessary to believe that the Messengers are part of Allāh's creation, and posses nothing of the Lordship's characteristics. Rather, they are only servants of Allāh (ﷻ), whom He honoured with His revelation. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِنَّنَا نَحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مُّثْلُكُمْ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ﴾

Their Messengers said to them, 'We are only human beings like you, but Allāh confers favour upon whom He wills of His servants'. (Ibrāhīm : 11).

Allāh also related a saying of His Prophet, Nūh (ﷺ) thus,

﴿وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَرَائِنُ أَنْفُو وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ﴾

And I do not tell you that I have the treasures of Allāh, neither do I know the unseen, nor do I claim to be an angel. (Hūd: 51).

I- This may also read, "That he [Muhammad] may know...", cf. Tafsīrs of both Ibn Jarīr and Ibn al-Jawzī –*Zād al-Masīr*– . (Translator)

While He similarly commanded our Prophet, Muhammad (ﷺ), to declare the same to his people,

﴿قُلْ لَا أَكُوْلُ لَكُمْ بِنَحْنِ أَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكُمْ وَلَا أَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكُمْ إِنِّي مُنْذَرٌ إِنِّي أَتَبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُرْسَلُ إِلَيَّ وَإِنِّي أَنْهَى إِلَيْكُمْ مِّا كُنْتُ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

Say, 'I do not tell you that I have the treasures of Allāh or that I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an angel. I only follow what is revealed to me'. (al-An'ām: 50).

Also important in this regard is to believe that Allāh helps and supports His Messengers, and that they and their followers will always be victorious in the end. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُنْصِرُ رَسُولَكَ وَالَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ﴾

Indeed, We will support our Messengers and those who believe during the life of this world and on the Day when the witnesses will stand forth. (Ghāfir: 51).

Equally, we must believe that some of the Messengers are superior to others; they are not all on the same footing. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿فَلَكُمُ الْأَرْسَلُ فَظَلَّلَنَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَلَمْ يَهْمِمْ مِنْ كُلِّكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ﴾

Those Messengers – some of them We caused to exceed others. Among them were those to whom Allāh spoke. (al-Baqarah: 253).

We must believe generally in all what has been mentioned above, as well as in any other related issues as stated in both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* concerning the Messengers of Allāh.

Believing in Allāh's Messengers in detail however, has to do only with those Messengers who have been mentioned expressly

either in the Glorious Qur'ān or in the *Sunnah*. One should believe minutely in whatever is contained in the religious texts regarding their names, stories, merits and attributes.

Some twenty five Prophets or Messengers in all have been mentioned in the Qur'ān, eighteen of them in the following consecutive verses alone:

﴿ وَنَلَكَ حُجَّةً إِذْ نَهَا إِلَيْهِ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ رَفِعَ دَرْجَتِي مِنْ شَاءَ إِنْ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلَيْهِ ۝ وَهَبَّنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۝ كُلَّا هَدِيتَنَا وَتُوْحَادِيَّنَا مِنْ قَبْلٍ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا ۝ دَاؤُودَ وَسَلِيْمَنَ وَأَيُوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَى وَهَارُونَ ۝ وَكَذَّالِكَ بَهْرَى الْمُخْرِبِينَ ۝ وَرَكِيْبَا ۝ وَمُحْمَّدَ وَعِصَمَى وَإِلَيْاسَ كُلُّ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ ۝ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا وَكُلَّا ۝ فَضَلَّنَا عَلَى الْعَنَائِيْنَ ۝ ﴾

And that was Our [conclusive] argument which We gave Ibrāhīm against his people. We raise in degrees whom We will. Certainly, your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing. And We gave him [i.e. Ibrāhīm] Ishāq and Ya'qūb, each of them We guided. And Nūh, We guided before; and among his descendants, Dawūd, Sulaimān, Ayyūb, Yūsuf, Mūsā and Hārūn. Thus do We reward those who do good. And Zakariyyā and Yahyā and 'Isa and Ilyās –all were of the righteous. And Ismā'il and al-Yasa' and Yūnus and Lūt– and all We preferred over the worlds. (al-An'ām: 83-86).

The names of the rest of them occur in different verses as we shall mention bellow:

﴿ وَإِلَيْهِ عَادٌ لَّغَاثَمْ هُودٌ ۝ ﴾

And to 'Ād [We sent] their brother, Hūd. (al-A'rāf: 65).

﴿وَإِلَيْنَا شׁُورٌ أَخَاهُمْ حَسَدِهِمْ﴾

And to Thamūd [We sent] their brother, Sāliḥ. (al-A'raf: 73).

﴿وَإِلَيْنَا مُدَرٌّ أَخَاهُمْ شَعِيبًا﴾

And to [the people of] Madyan [We sent] their brother, Shu'ayb. (al-A'raf: 85).

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَصْطَفَنَا آدَمَ وَنُوحًا﴾

Indeed, Allāh chose Ādām and Nūh... (Āl-'Imrān: 33).

﴿وَإِسْكِيلٌ وَإِدْرِيسٌ وَذَا الْكَفَلٌ كُلُّهُمْ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾

And [remember] Ismā'il, Idrīs, and Dhul-Kifl; all were of the patient. (al-Anbiyā': 85).

﴿مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ سَمِعُوا أَيْدِيهِمْ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحْمَاءٌ بَيْنَهُمْ﴾

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers [but] merciful among themselves. (al-Fath: 29).

Our faith regarding the aforementioned Prophets and Messengers should therefore be in detail. We should also acknowledge that each one of them was either a Prophet or a Messenger sent by Allāh, in accordance with whatever Allāh or His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) has said concerning them.

Moreover, all that has been recorded in Islamic texts regarding their virtues, characteristics and stories must be accepted as true. This applies, for instance, to the case of Prophets Ibrāhīm and Muhammd –May Allāh's peace and mercy be upon them– whom Allāh has taken as close friends. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَأَخْدَى اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا﴾

**And Allāh did take Ibrāhīm as an intimate friend.** (al-Nisā': 125).  
The Prophet (ﷺ) also said,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَخْذَنِي خَلِيلًا كَمَا أَخْذَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا﴾

**Indeed, Allāh took me as an intimate friend, just as He had taken Ibrāhīm before.** (*Muslim*: 532).

And to that of Mūsā (ﷺ) with whom Allāh had direct talk. A Qur'anic verse reads as follows:

﴿وَكَلَمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَحْكِيمًا﴾

**And to Mūsā Allāh spoke directly.** (al-Nisā': 164).

Other examples in this connection include Prophet Dawūd (ﷺ), for whom Allāh subdued the mountains and the birds, as they glorified Allāh along with him. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَسَخَّرَنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَجِّنُ وَالظَّرِيرَ وَكَثَّا فَتَعَلَّبَ﴾

**And We subdued the mountains and the birds to exalt [Us], along with Dawūd. And We were doing [that].** (al-Anbiyā': 79).

Allāh also softened iron for him. Thus, He says,

﴿وَلَقَدْ جَاءَنَا دَاوُدَ بِنَصْلًا يَسْجُنُ أُونِي مَعَهُ وَالظَّرِيرَ وَالنَّارَ لَهُ الْعِزِيزُ﴾

**And assuredly, We bestowed grace on Dawūd from Us.** [We said], 'O mountains and birds, glorify [Allāh] repeatedly with him.' And We made iron pliable for him. (*Saba'*: 10).

Similarly, Allāh subjected the wind to the orders of Sulaimān, just as He subdued for him *jinn* who worked in front of him according to his wish. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الْرِّيحَ عَذْوَهَا شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحَهَا شَهْرٌ وَأَسْنَا لَهُ عَيْنَ الْقَطْرِ وَمِنَ الْجِنِّ مَنْ يَعْمَلُ  
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ بِمَا دَنَ رَبِيعٌ ﴾

And to Sulimān We [made obedient] the wind – its morning [stride] was a month's [journey] and its afternoon [stride] was a month's [journey]<sup>(1)</sup>. And We caused a fount of [molten] brass to gush forth for him, and there were among the *jinn* who worked in front of him, by the Permission of his Lord. (*Saba'*: 12).

Allāh also taught Sulaimān the language of birds. He says,

﴿ وَرَبِيعَ سُلَيْمَانَ دَارِودٍ وَقَالَ لِتَابِهَا أَنَّا شَعَّلْنَا مَعْنَى الظَّرِيرِ وَأَوْنَانَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ﴾

And Sulaimān inherited [the knowledge and Prophet hood of his father,] Dawūd. He said, 'O people, we have been taught the speech of birds, and on us have been bestowed all things'<sup>(2)</sup>. (*al-Naml*: 16).

We should also believe in all what Allāh has narrated in His Book of the stories of His Messengers with their nations. This includes the antagonism usually displayed by their respective people and Allāh's help that came for His Messengers and their true followers. Some instances of this are the accounts of what happened between Prophet Mūsā and Fir'awn (Pharaoh), between Ibrāhīm and his people, as well as Nūh, Hūd, Sālih, Shu'aib, Lūt and their respective nations. Still related to this is what Allāh told us of the relation between Yūsuf, his brothers and the people of Egypt; between Yūnus and his people, and the rest of what we find either in the

1- The implication here is that Sulaimān (ﷺ) could travel as long as two months' journey in just one day. Cf. *Tafsīr al-Sa'īd* p. 623. (Translator)

2- i.e. all things that a Prophet or monarch is usually given. (Translator)

Glorious Qur'ān or the *Sunnah* regarding the stories of Allāh's Prophets and Messengers. We must believe in all, minutely and as exactly recorded in those Islamic texts; thus, the general and thorough belief in the Messengers are established. Allāh, the Exalted knows best.

### 3.4 Our duty towards the Messengers of Allāh

The Muslim nation must uphold the rights due for Allāh's Messengers. This is in line with their lofty religious position and their high and superior ranking in the sight of Allāh (ﷻ). Furthermore, the honour He has conferred upon them by assigning to them dignified tasks, and by entrusting them exclusively with the duty of conveying His revelation and law to the entire creation.

These rights include:

- 1- Believing in whatever they have brought, and in the fact that all of them, without exception, were sent by their Lord, Allāh, to convey His message to whomever He sent them. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا يُطْكِنَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ﴾

**And We sent no Messenger save that he should be obeyed by Allāh's Permission.** (al-Nisā': 64).

﴿ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَإِذَا دُرِّدُوا فَإِنَّ قَوْلَتُمْ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلْغُ الْعَيْنُ ﴾

**And obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and beware! But if you turn away, then you should know that upon Our Messenger is only [the responsibility for] clear notification.** (al-Mā'idah: 92).

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَرِبِّيْدُوكَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَيَعْلُوْنَ تُؤْمِنُ بِعَصْرٍ وَنَكْثُرُ بِعَصْرٍ وَرِبِّيْدُوكَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَيِّلًا أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكُفَّارُ حَقًّا ﴾

**Indeed, those who disbelieve in Allāh and His Messengers and wish to separate between [the belief in] Allāh and [the belief in] His Messengers and say, 'We believe in some, but reject others', and wish to take a course midway. They are, truly, the unbelievers...** (al-Nisā': 150, 151).

Therefore, as a prerequisite of the belief in Allāh's Messengers, we should accept as true all what they have brought of the divine message.

In addition, it is necessary to know that neither mankind nor *jinn* are allowed to follow any of the past Messengers after the coming of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), who has been sent to all. His law has nullified all the preceding laws of the previous Prophets; hence, no religion is valid save that which Allāh has sent through this noble Prophet, and none but him alone may be followed. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَمَن يَتَّبِعْ عَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَابِرِينَ ﴾

**And whoever desires other than Islam as religion – it will never be accepted from him. Yet, in the hereafter, he will be among the losers.** (Al-'Imrān: 85).

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَّا كَافَةً لِلنَّاسِ بِشِرًا وَكَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

**And We have not sent you [O Muḥammad] except to all mankind, as a bringer of good tidings and a warner. But most of the people do not know.** (Saba': 28).

﴿فَلَمْ يَكُنْهَا أَكْثَرٌ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا ﴾

**Say, 'O you people, indeed I am Allāh's Messenger to you all'.** (al-A'rāf: 158).

2- Another right that is due for Allāh's Messengers is to love and support them, and avoid hating or contracting the enmity of any one of them. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حَزْبَ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْغَلِيلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

And whoever is an ally of Allāh, His Messenger and the believers- it is the party of Allāh that must certainly triumph. (al-Mā'idah: 56 ).

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُنَا لِبَعْضٍ أَكْفَارٌ بَعْضٌ ﴿٥﴾

And the believers, men and women are allies of one another. (al-Tawbah: 71).

The above verse describes the believers as being allies or helpers of one another, and Messengers of Allāh are no exception, being the most perfect in Faith. Hence, the love and support the believers have for the Messengers transcend such that they have for any other person, on the grounds of their exalted position in religion and their high status of Faith. Based on this, Allāh warned against harbouring enmity or hatred against the Messengers, and even mentioned this alongside the hostility towards Himself and His angels, making both equal in terms of any ensuing punishment or requital. He says,

فَمَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَلَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكُفَّارِ ﴿٩٨﴾

Whoever is an enemy to Allāh, His angels, His Messengers and [Angels] Jibril and Mīkāl- then certainly, Allāh is an enemy to the disbelievers. (al-Baqarah: 98).

3- To believe that the Messengers are superior to the rest of mankind; no one, no matter how righteous and pious he/she may be, can reach their status. This is because being a bearer of Allāh's message comes exclusively through His own selection and not through diligence or hard work; Allāh chooses for His mission whomever He wills among His creation. Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ بَصِيرٌ﴾

Allāh chooses from the angels Messengers and from the people. Certainly Allāh is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. (al-Hajj: 75).

﴿وَنِلَكُ حُجَّةً عَلَيْهِمَا إِذْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ فَرَفِعْتَ مَرْجِعَتَهُمْ مَنْ شَاءَتْ﴾

And that was Our [conclusive] argument which We gave Ibrāhīm against his people. We raise in degrees whom We will ... (al-An'ām: 83). In the verses following this, as we have mentioned earlier in this chapter, Allāh referred to a number of Prophets and Messengers and then said,

﴿وَكَلَّا لَهُ أَفْضَلُ كَا عَلَىٰ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

And all We preferred over the worlds<sup>(1)</sup>. (al-An'ām: 86).

The *Sunnah* also testifies to the supremacy of Allāh's Messengers over the rest of His creation. According to Abu Hurairah (رض), the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(لا ينبغي لعبد أن يقول: أنا خير من يونس بن مقي).

**It is unfit that a man should say, 'I am better than [Prophet] Yūnus the son of Matthew'.** This version of the *hadīth* has been reported by both Bukhārī and Muslim (Bukhārī: 3416; Muslim: 2376<sup>(2)</sup>). Moreover, another version narrated only by Bukhārī reads as follows:

(من قال أنا خير من يونس بن مقي فقد كذب).

**Whoever says, 'I am better than Yūnus the son of Matthew' – has told a lie.** (Bukhārī: 4604).

1- i.e. of their time, *Tafsīr al-Baghawī*, vol. i, p. 165. (Translator)

2- The *hadīth* as quoted above is from *sahīh Bukhārī*.

Some scholars commented on this *hadīth* saying, "The Prophet (ﷺ) said this with a view to prevent a situation where some ignorant people would assume what Allāh mentioned in the Glorious Qur'ān concerning Yūnus (ﷺ) to be a sign of degradation for him. Muslim scholars explained further that what happened to Yūnus (ﷺ) does not, in the least, bespeak a relegation for him as a Prophet. He was specifically mentioned in the above *hadīth* on the grounds of what Allāh has said of his case in the Glorious Qur'ān. For instance, Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿ وَمَا أَنُوْنَ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَنِّيًّا فَظَنَّ أَنْ نَقْرِئَ عَلَيْهِ فَكَانَتِي فِي الظُّلْمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾ ﴿ ٨٧ ﴾ فَأَنْجَجْنَا لَهُ وَمَحِيتَةً مِنَ الْعَوْنَى وَكَذَّابَكَ شَجِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾ ﴿ ٨٨ ﴾

And [remember] Dhū-nNūn<sup>(1)</sup> [i.e. Prophet Yūnus] when he departed in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he cried out within the depths of darkness, 'None has the right to be worshipped but You [Allāh]; glorified be You. Truly, I have been of the wrongdoers'. So We responded to him and saved him from distress. And thus do We save the faithful. (al-Anbiyā': 87,88).

Allāh has also said,

﴿ قَرَأَ يُونُسَ لِيَعْنَ الْمَرْسَلِينَ ﴾ ﴿ ١٤٨ ﴾

And indeed, Yūnus was among the Messengers [of Allāh] ... (al-Sāffār: 139-148).

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I- Literally: 'The man of the fish or the whale'.

4- We should also believe that the Messengers themselves are not equal in status. Allāh has given preference to some of them over the others. He says,

﴿لَكُمْ الْرِّسُولُ فَمَنْ أَنْهَاكُمْ عَنْ تَعْبُدِي وَرَبِّكُمْ إِنَّمَا مَنْ يَنْهَاكُمْ دِرْجَاتٌ﴾

Those Messengers – some of them We caused to exceed others; among them were those to whom Allāh spoke, and others He raised to degrees [of honour]. (al-Baqarah: 253).

A famous scholar of the Qur'anic exegesis, Imam Ṭabari, said in his commentary on this verse, "Allāh, the exalted says, those my Messengers; some of them I have made superior to others. To some, like Mūsa, I spoke directly, while I raised some above others in rank by honouring them and placing them highly". Hence, part of the rights we owe them as a Muslim nation is to place every one of them appropriately in terms of supremacy and high status, in, and not out of the context of the religious texts.

5- Asking Allāh to send His peace and blessing upon them. In fact Allāh has commanded us to do this, and informed us that the good praise and the *tastīm* (asking Allāh to let His peace be upon someone) that people make for His Messengers shall remain for them even after their death. Allāh (ﷻ) says of Prophet Nūh (ﷺ),

﴿وَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ فِي الْأَخْرِينَ سَلَامٌ عَلَى نُوحٍ فِي الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

And We left for him [favourable mention] among later generations. 'Peace be upon Nūh among the worlds'. (al-Şāffāt: 78, 79).

He also said of Ibrāhīm (ﷺ),

﴿ وَرَكَّنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ ﴾ ١٠٨ ﴿ سَلَّمُ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴾

And We left for him [favourable mention] among later generations. 'Peace be upon Ibrāhīm'. (al-Şāfiṭah: 108, 109).

And of Mūsā and Hārūn, He said,

﴿ وَرَكَّنَا عَلَيْهِمَا فِي الْآخِرِينَ ﴾ ١١٩ ﴿ سَلَّمُ عَلَى مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ ﴾

And We left for them [favourable mention] among later generations. 'Peace be upon Mūsā and Hārūn'. (al-Şāfiṭah: 119, 120).

Furthermore, He said in a more general term,

﴿ وَسَلَّمُ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴾

And peace be on the Messengers. (al-Şāfiṭah: 181).

Imam Ibn Kathīr said while commenting on the above, "The saying of Allāh, 'Peace be upon Nūh among the worlds' explains the favourable mention and praise which Allāh has left for Nūh, which means that every nation or group of people ask Allāh to bestow His peace upon him<sup>(1)</sup>".

Similarly, another erudite scholar, Imam al-Nawawi reported a consensus reached by Muslim scholars, declaring the invocation of Allāh's blessing on all the Prophets as not only lawful but even recommended. In his words, "Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed that it is lawful to ask for Allāh's blessing to be bestowed on our Prophet, Muḥammad (ﷺ). Likewise, those of reliable authority among the scholars have reached a consensus regarding the permissibility of this with respect to other Prophets, as well as the

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I- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr* vol. vii, p. 20.

angels, independently<sup>(1)</sup>. As for other people [i.e. other than the Prophets], the vast majority of Muslim scholars oppose doing this for them originally<sup>(2)</sup>.

These are some of what we should uphold concerning the rights of the Messengers of Allāh. They are well established in the Islamic texts and enjoy the support of the Muslim scholars. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

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1- i.e. even when the name of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) has not been mentioned. (Translator)

2- i.e. unless they are mentioned along with the Prophet. (Translator)

### 3.5 Messengers described by Allāh as Men of Firm Resolution (*'Ulu al- 'Azm*)

The "*'Ulu al- 'Azm*" among the Messengers are those who were both resolute and forbearing. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ﴾

**So be patient [O Muḥammad], as were the Messengers of Firm Resolution.** (al-Aḥqāf: 35).

Muslim scholars have different opinions concerning the identity of those Messengers; in the view of some, all Messengers of Allāh belong to this category. According to this viewpoint, the word 'من' which occurs in the original Arabic text of the above quoted verse refers merely to their (*'Ulu al- 'Azm's*) being Messengers of Allāh, and should not be mistaken for the other 'من' which denotes partition, and literally means: 'among' or 'of'. Ibn Zayd, one of the scholars who subscribe to this opinion, has this to say, "All Messengers of Allāh have been of determination. No Prophet [or Messenger] has ever been sent by Allāh, unless he was found to be resolute, judicious and discerning".

Another view held by some other scholars put the number of the "*'Ulu al- 'Azm*" at just five, namely: Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, 'Isa and Muḥammad, may the peace and blessing of Allāh be upon all of them. Speaking in support of this, Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said, "The '*'Ulu al- 'Azm* among the Messengers are: Prophets Muḥammad, Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and 'Isa, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon all of them". Subscribers to this view include Mujāhid, 'Atā' al-Khurasāni and many scholars of the later generations.

In the Glorious Qur'ān, Allāh mentioned those five Messengers together on two occasions, and this apparently serves as proof backing the latter opinion. In the chapter of *al-Ahzāb*<sup>(1)</sup>, Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَلَدَّ أَخْذَنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِمَّنْ هُمْ بِهِ رَبِّكُوكَ وَمِنْ فُجُورِ الْأَرْضِيْمَ وَمُؤْمِنَ وَعَسِيَ ابْنَ سَمْرَةَ وَلَدَّ أَخْذَنَا مِنْهُمْ مِمَّنْ كَانُوا ظَالِمِيْكَ ﴾

And [remember, o Muhammad] when We took from the Prophets their covenant, and from you and from Nūh and Ibrāhīm and Mūsa and 'Isa, the son of Maryam; and We took from them a solemn covenant. (*al-Ahzāb*: 7).

The other verse is in the chapter of *al-Shūrā*<sup>(2)</sup>, where Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَانُوا وَصَّلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَرَحْمَةَ إِلَيْكُوكَ وَمَا وَصَّلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَرَحْمَةَ إِلَيْكُوكَ وَمُؤْمِنَ وَعَسِيَّقَ أَنْ أَفْعُلُوا الظَّرِيْنَ وَلَا تَنْفَرُوْفَأَنْ فِيْهِ ﴾

He [Allāh] has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Nūh, and that which We have revealed to you [Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Ibrāhīm [Abraham], Mūsa [Moses] and 'Isa [Jesus] – to establish the religion and not be divided therein. (*al-Shūrā*: 13).

According to some scholars of the Qur'ānic exegesis, "The reason for this exclusive mention of just the names of those Messengers is to establish that they possess higher honour and dignity; as their laws were of the most well-known, while they themselves belonged to the class of the firmly resolute Messengers".

1- i.e. Chapter 33 of the Glorious Qur'ān.

2- i.e. Chapter 42 of the Glorious Qur'ān.

In addition, those five Prophets are the best of all the Messengers of Allāh, and of mankind as a whole. Abū Hurairah (رض) said, "The elites among the descendants of Ādam are five: Nūh, Ibrāhīm, ‘Isa, Mūsā and Muḥammad, while the best of these five is Muḥammad, may Allāh's peace and blessings be on all of them". (Reported by al-Bazzār –as in *Kashf al-Astār* vol. iii p. 114- ; *Majma‘ al-Zawā'id* vol viii p. 255; *al-Mustadrak* vol. ii, p. 546<sup>(1)</sup>).

In another *ḥadīth* which further states Prophet Muḥammad's supremacy as the best among the best, Abū Hurairah (رض) quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

أَنَا سَيِّدُ وَلَدِ آدَمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَوَّلُ مَنْ يَشْقَى عَنْهُ الْقَوْمُ وَأَوَّلُ شَافِعٍ وَأَوَّلُ مُنْتَفِعٍ .

I shall be the leader for all mankind on the Day of Resurrection. I shall also be the first person to come out of his grave, the first intercessor and the first person whose intercession will be accepted. (*Muslim*: 2278; *Abū Dāwūd*: 4673, vol.v p.38).

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1- The men of this *isnād* (chain of transmission), according to Ḥaithamī, are men of the *sahīk ḥadīths*, and according to al-Ḥākim the chain of transmission is reliable, al-Dhahabi also assented to this.

**3.6 The special qualities of our Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) and the rights owed him by his followers. Also to be discussed here is the veracity of seeing him in a dream**

**(a) His special qualities**

Allāh (ﷻ) has distinguished our Prophet (ﷺ) with many outstanding traits and qualities, with which He also set him above all other Messengers and the entire creation. These qualities include the following:

- 1- Universality of his mission, which embraces both mankind and *jinn*. Hence, they must all follow him and believe in his message. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَّا كَافَةً لِلنَّاسِ بُشِّرًا وَكَذِيرًا ﴾

And We have not sent you [O Muḥammad] except to all mankind, as a bringer of good tidings and a warner ... (Saba': 28).

﴿ بَارَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ نَذِيرًا ﴾

Blessed be He [Allāh] Who sent down the Criterion [The Qur'aṇ] upon His servant that he may be to the worlds a warner. (al-Furqān: 1). According to Ibn 'Abbās, (رضي الله عنهما) the phrase "To the worlds" means to mankind and *jinn*.

Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) also narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(فُصِّلَتْ عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ بَسْتٌ: أُعْطِيَتْ جَوَامِعُ الْكَلْمَ، وَنَصَرَتْ بِالرُّغْبَ، وَاحْلَتْ لِيِ الْفَعَانَ، وَجَعَلَتْ لِيِ الْأَرْضَ طَهُورًا وَمَسْجِدًا، وَأَرْسَلَتْ إِلَيِ الْخَلْقِ كَافَةً، وَخَتَمَ بِيِ النَّبِيُّونَ).

I have been granted privilege over all other Prophets in six respects. I am endowed with concise expression that carries a wide range of meaning, and have been helped with the fear [that my enemies feel in their heart, which makes them fearful of attacking

me]. Spoils have been made lawful for me, and the earth as *tahūr*<sup>(1)</sup> and place of worship. I am sent to the entire creation, and have been made the last of the Prophets. (*Muslim*: 523)

In a related development, Abu Hurairah also quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ يَبْلُو لَا يَسْمَعُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بَهُودٌ وَلَا نَصَارَىٰ، فَمَنْ يَعْوِزُ رَبَّهُ  
يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ بِالَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ إِلَّا كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ).

By Him [Allāh] in whose Hand is the life of Muhammad! Any member of this nation, whether a Jew or a Christian, who hears about me but fails to believe in what I have been sent with till he dies – he shall be one of the inhabitants of Hell-fire. (*Muslim*: 153).

2- His being the last of Allāh's Prophets and Messengers. Said Allāh (ﷻ),

﴿مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدًا أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ ﴾.

Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allāh and the last of the Prophets. (*al-Ahzāb*: 40).

According to Abu Hurairah (رض), as narrated by both Bukhāri and Muslim, the Prophet (ﷺ) has said,

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1- *Tahūr* is anything that is itself pure, and may be used for ritual purification, such as clean water and sand. (Translator)

(إِنَّ مثْلِي وَمُثْلَ الْأَنبِيَاءِ مِنْ قَبْلِي كَمْثُلِ رَجُلٍ يَعْنِي بِهَا فَاحسَنَهُ وَاجْهَلَهُ، إِلَّا مَوْضِعُ لِبْنَةِ مِنْ زَاوِيَةٍ، فَجَعَلَ النَّاسُ يَطْرُفُونَ بِهِ وَيَعْجِبُونَ لَهُ وَيَقُولُونَ: هَلَا وَضَعَتْ هَذِهِ الْلِبْنَةُ؟ قَالَ: قَاتَ اللِبْنَةُ وَأَنَا خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ).

**My similitude in comparison with the Prophets before me is that of a man who has built a house finely and beautifully, except for a space for just one brick in a corner of that house. People go about the house and admire it, but also say, 'What if a brick had been put [in the space]!?' The Prophet added, 'I am the brick; I am the last of the Prophets'. (*Bukhārī*: 3535; *Muslim*: 2286<sup>(1)</sup>).**

Having known these proofs, the Muslim nation as a whole, both past and present generations have unanimously agreed on this creed. They have similarly reached a consensus declaring whoever claims to be a Prophet, after Muḥammad (ﷺ), an infidel who must be subjected to capital punishment of death should he persist in this heretical claim. Al- Alūsi, a prominent Muslim scholar, said, "Muhammad's termination of prophet hood has been clearly stated in the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, while the Muslims have also unanimously agreed on that. Whoever claims the opposite is a disbeliever, and must face the death penalty should he insist on his claim".

3- Allāh has supported the Prophet (ﷺ) with the Glorious Qur'ān he revealed to him, as it is the greatest of all miracles and the most evident of all signs. It is the words of Allāh, well-protected against corruption and alteration, and shall remain with the Muslim nation until the time it will be raised again to Allāh, by His permission. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

I- The *haadīth* as above is from the *Bukhārī* compilation.

﴿ قُلْ لَئِنْ أَجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسَانُونَ وَالْجِنُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِعَضُّهُمْ لِيَقْضِي ظَهِيرًا ﴾

Say, 'If mankind and *jinn* gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another'. (*al-Isrā'*: 88).

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ الْكِتَابَ يُتَلَوَّنَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّكُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ لَرَحْمَةٌ وَذَكْرَنِي لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

Is it not sufficient for them that We sent down to you the Book [the Qur'ān] which is recited to them? Indeed, therein is mercy and a reminder for a believing nation. (*al-'Ankabūt*: 51).

Bukhāri and Muslim narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah (رض) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(مَا مِنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ نَبِيٌّ إِلَّا أُعْطِيَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ مَا مُثِلَهُ مِنْهُ آمِنٌ عَلَيْهِ الْبَشَرُ، وَإِنَّمَا كَانَ الَّذِي أُرْتَبَتْهُ وَحْيًا أَرْجَاهُ اللَّهَ إِلَيْيَّ، فَأَرْجُو أَنْ أَكُونَ أَكْثَرَهُمْ تَابِعًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ).

There has never been a Prophet except that Allāh gave him of miracles what led people to believe in him. What I have been given is the revelation which Allāh revealed to me, and I hope therefore, to have more followers than any other Prophet would have on the Day of Resurrection. (*Bukhāri*: 4981; *Muslim*: 152).

4- His nation is the best of all nations, and they will constitute the vast majority of the dwellers of Paradise. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ إِنَّكُمْ خَيْرُ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجْتُ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتَرْهِبُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ الْمُنْكَرُ ﴾

You are the best nation ever produced for mankind. You enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in Allāh. (*Al-'Imrān*: 110).

According to Mu'āwiyah bin Haidah al-Qushayti (رضي الله عنه)، the Prophet (ﷺ) explained the meaning of the just quoted verse as follows:  
 (إنكم تسمون بسبعين أمة أنتم خيرها وآخرها على الله).

**You [i.e. my adherents] have come at the close of some seventy nations, out of which you are the best and most honourable in the Sight of Allāh.** (*Musnad Ahmad*, vol. iv, p.447; *Sunan Tirmidhi*; 3001, vol. v, p. 226<sup>(1)</sup>).

Another tradition narrated by 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) has it that,

كما مع النبي ﷺ في قبة فقال: (أترضون أن تكونوا ربع أهل الجنة). قلنا: نعم. قال: (أترضون أن تكونوا ثلث أهل الجنة). قلنا: نعم. قال: (أترضون أن تكونوا شطر أهل الجنة). قلنا: نعم. قال: (والذى نفس محمد بيده إنى لأرجو أن تكونوا نصف أهل الجنة وذلك أن الجنة لا يدخلها إلا نفس مسلمة وما أنتم في أهل الشرك إلا كالشعرة البيضاء في جلد الغر الأسود، أو كالشعرة السوداء في جلد الغر الآخر).

We were once in the company of the Prophet (ﷺ) in a tent, then he said, 'Would it please you to be one-fourth of the inhabitants of Paradise'? We replied, 'Yes'. Then he said, 'Would it please you to be one-third of the inhabitants of Paradise'? We said, 'Yes'. He said further, 'Would it please you to be half of the inhabitants of Paradise'? We answered, "Yes". Then he said, 'By Him [Allāh] in whose Hand is the life of Muhammad, I hope that you will indeed constitute half the number of the people of Paradise. No one shall enter Paradise except a soul that submits itself [to Allāh as Muslim], and you [my followers] in comparison to the polytheists

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I- The *hadīth* has been classified by Tirmidhi as '*hasan*', but as '*sahīl*' by both Ḥākim and Dhahabi.

are just like a single white hair on the skin of a black ox, or a single black hair on the skin of a red ox'. (*Bukhārī*: 6528; *Muslim*: 221).

5- He shall be the pre-eminent personality among the descendants of Ādam on the Day of Resurrection. As we have quoted earlier<sup>(1)</sup>, Abu Huriarah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(أنا سيد ولد آدم يوم القيمة، وأول من يشق عنـه القـرء، وأول شافع، وأول مشفع).

I shall be the leader for all mankind on the Day of Resurrection. I shall also be the first person to come out of his grave, the first intercessor, and the first person whose intercession will be accepted. (*Muslim*: 2278; *Abū Dāwūd*: 4673, vol.v p.38).

6- He is the owner of the greatest intercession; when, on the Day of Resurrection, he shall intercede for the people at the *Mawqif*<sup>(2)</sup>, pleading to their Lord [Allāh] to decide their cases without further delay. Before then, other Messengers of high repute, one after the other, would have tenably avoided playing this vital role, which Allāh described as 'station of praise' in the following verse:

﴿عَسَى أَن يَجِدَنَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مَقَامًا مُخْتَرُودًا﴾

**It is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a station of praise.** (*al-Isrā'*: 79).

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1- p. 254.

2- *Mawqif* literally means: stopping place, station, scene etc. In the context above, it refers to the gathering of all creatures in a single place on the Day of Resurrection. (Translator)

A number of the Prophet's companions and the generation after them (the *Tābi'īn*) including Hudhaifah, Salman, Anas, Abu Hurairah, Ibn Mas'ūd, Jābir bin 'Abdullah, Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), Mujāhid, Qatādah and others have all interpreted the 'station of praise' mentioned above to mean the intercession. Qatādah, one of them, said, "The Muslim scholars used to construe the 'station of praise' as the Prophet's intercession on the Day of Resurrection".

The Prophet's intercession for the people at the *Mawqif* on the Day of Resurrection is further confirmed in the *Sunnah*; precisely in a lengthy tradition known as the '*hadīth* of intercession', reported by both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه). The *hadīth* points out that Prophets Ādām, Nūh, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and 'Isā -may Allāh's peace be on them- would all, in sequence, express their wish to be excused from doing the intercession, claiming that they are unsuitable for such an undertaking. The *hadīth* continues as follows:

(لَيَاتُونِي فَأَنْظُلُنِي، فَإِسْمَاعِيلُ عَلَى رَبِّي فَيُرِيدُنِي لِي عَلَيْهِ، فَلَذَا رَأَيْتَ رَبِّي وَقَعَتْ لَهُ سَاجِدًا فِي دُعْيَيْنِي مَا شاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَدْعُنِي، ثُمَّ يَقَالُ لِي: ارْفِعْ حَمْدَكَ، قُلْ يَسْمَعُ، وَسُلْ تَعْطِي، وَاشْفَعْ تُشْفَعُ فَاحْدُ رَبِّي بِحَمْدِكَ عَلِمْتُهَا ثُمَّ أَشْفَعْ ...).

Thereafter, they would come to me (i.e. Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ), and I shall proceed to ask for an access to my Lord, which will be given. On seeing my Lord, I shall prostrate before Him, and He would leave me in that state as long as He would like. Then I shall be told, 'O Muḥammad, raise [your head] and speak, you will be listened to; and ask [for whatever you like], you will be granted your request; and intercede, your intercession will be accepted. I shall then praise my Lord with certain forms of praise He has taught me, and then intercede... (*Bukhārī*: 3340;  *Muslim*: 193).

7- He owns the flag of praise; a real flag he shall carry exclusively on the Day of Resurrection, while the whole humanity will be subordinate to him, and gather under his banner. In the opinion of some Muslim scholars, the Prophet (ﷺ) deserves this on the grounds of his praising Allāh with certain words of praise, such that no other created being has ever used to praise Him. Pointing to the Prophet's exclusive possession of this excellent virtue, Abū Sa'īd al Khudri (رضي الله عنه) quoted him as saying,

(أنا مبد ولد آدم يوم القيمة، ويدلي لواء الحمد ولا فخر، وما من نبي يومئذ آدم فمن سواه، إلا تحت لواني، وإن أرل من تششق عنه الأرض ولا فخر).

I shall be the pre-eminent person among mankind on the Day of Resurrection. The flag of praise shall be with me – I say this without boasting. Every Prophet, Ādam and others will all be under my flag. Let me add also, without boasting, that I shall be the first [person to come out alive] after the earth would have split apart. (*Sunan Tirmidhi*: 3615, vol. v, p. 587<sup>(1)</sup>).

8- The most esteemed position that will be accessible to only one person in Paradise, otherwise known as '*al-Wasiṭah*', also belongs to the Prophet (ﷺ). 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Āṣ (رضي الله عنهما) reported to have heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) saying,

(إذا سمعتم المزدوج يقولوا مثل ما يقول ثم صلوا علىي، فإنه من صلى علىي صلاة على عليه الله بها عشراء، ثم سلوا الله في الوسيلة، فإذا مرتلة في الجنة لا تتباهي إلا لعبد من عباد الله، وارجو أن تكون أنا هو فمن سأله في الوسيلة حللت له الشفاعة).

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1- Tirmidhi classified this *hadīth* as '*hasan-sahīh*'. Imam Ahmad also narrated an almost identical version in his *Musnād* vol. iii, p. 2.

When you hear the *Mu'addhin*<sup>(1)</sup>, repeat after him what he says and then ask for [Allāh's] blessings to be on me. Whoever invokes Allāh to bless me, shall receive that back from Him tenfold. After that, you should beseech Allāh to grant me the '*Wasīlah*'; a rank in Paradise accessible only to one of Allāh's servants, and I hope to be that servant. Anyone who asks [Allāh] to grant me the '*Wasīlah*', let him/her rest assured of my intercession. (*Muslim*: 384).

These and many other characteristics and outstanding traits of the Prophet (ﷺ) indicate his prominent position in the sight of Allāh, as well as his high status in this life and the life to come.

#### **(b) What the followers of Prophet Muḥammad owe him as rights**

Many are the rights that members of the Prophet's nation owe him. Some of these rights have been mentioned earlier as part of what the Muslim nation as a whole owes Allāh's Messengers generally. In the coming pages, we shall focus on those rights that are specifically for him (ﷺ).

1- To believe, in detail, in his prophet hood and message, with a conviction that his message has abrogated previous missions of the past Messengers. This necessitates to accept, as truth, whatever he said, and to act strictly according to his orders. In addition to shunning all what he has forbidden, and worshipping Allāh only in a manner he has prescribed. Proofs on this are in both the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

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1- i.e. who calls people to come out and pray in the mosque at the appointed time of each obligatory prayer. (Translator)

﴿فَلَا يُمْنِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَأَنْتُرُ الَّذِي أَرْزَكَنَا﴾

So believe in Allāh and His Messenger and the Light [i.e. the Qur’ān], which We have sent down. (al-Taghābun: 8).

﴿فَلَا يُمْنِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ الْأَنْبِيَّ الَّذِي يَجْوَزُ بِاللَّهِ وَحْكَمَتْهُ، وَأَتَيْعُوهُ لَعْلَكُمْ تَهْدَوْنَ﴾

Believe, therefore, in Allāh and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allāh and His words. And follow him so that you may be guided. (al-A‘tāf: 158).

﴿وَمَا مَا إِنَّكُمْ الرَّسُولُ مُخْدُودٌ وَمَا مَا إِنَّكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾

And whatever the Messenger has given you –take it; and whatever he has forbidden you– refrain [from it]. (al-Ifāshir: 7).

‘Abdullah bin ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(أمرت أن أقاتل الناس حتى يشهدوا أن لا إله إلا الله، وأن محمداً رسول الله، ويقيموا الصلاة، ويزتوا الزكاة، فإذا فعلوا ذلك عصموا مني دماءهم وأموالهم إلا بحق الإسلام وحسابهم على الله).

I have been commanded to fight people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh and that Muḥammad is His Messenger, and perform the obligatory prayers (*Salāh*), and pay *Zakāh*. If they do–then their lives and property are safe, except for another Islamic injunction [if violated], and their reckoning will be done by Allāh. (Bukhārī: 25; Muslim: 22).

2- It is compulsory to believe that the Messenger (ﷺ) did convey Allāh's message, discharged the trust, and offered useful advice to the people. Hence, he left no virtue without having encouraged and persuaded them to engage therein, and there was no vice except that he has forbidden and warned them not to commit it. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْلَمْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَنْهَىَ عَلَيْكُمْ نَعْمَلِي وَرَضِيَتْ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامُ دِينًا﴾

This day I have perfected for you your religion, completed My Favour upon you, and approved for you Islam as religion. (*al-Mā'idah*: 3). According to Abū Dardā', the Prophet (ﷺ) has said,

(...) وَلَمْ يَأْتِ اللَّهُ لَقَدْ تَرْكَكُمْ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِ الْبَيْضَاءِ، لِيَلْهَا وَغَارِهَا سَوَادُهَا.

**By Allāh! I have left you on a plain course; the night thereof is as clear as the day.** (*Sunan Ibn Mājah* (preface), vol. i, p. 4 *hadīth* no. 5).

A testimony regarding the Prophet's conveyance of Allāh's message came from the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) at their largest ever congregation of the farewell pilgrimage. On that day, the Prophet had delivered a far-reaching sermon, during which he explained what Allāh either prescribed or forbidden for them, in addition to his advice for them to uphold the [laws of] the Book of Allāh. Lastly, the Prophet (ﷺ) remarked, "**You shall be questioned concerning me; what would you say?**". They replied, 'We will bear witness that you have conveyed [the message], discharged [your duty as a Prophet] and offered [sincere] counsel'. At this point, he raised his forefinger towards the sky, then pointed it at the audience, and proclaimed, "**O Allāh, be witness [to this]**" three times. (*Muslim*: 1218<sup>(1)</sup>).

Another confirmation of this meaning appears in a saying of Abu Dharr (رضي الله عنه) that, "By the time Muhammad (ﷺ) left us [i.e. died], there was not even a single bird flapping its wings in the sky, except that he had told us something about it". (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. v p. 153).

I- The *hadīth* is part of the Jābir bin 'Abdullah's detailed account of the Prophet's pilgrimage.

Sayings of our worthy predecessors and scholars in this respect are numerous.

3- To love him (ﷺ) more than we love our own selves and the entire creation. It is incontrovertible that we must love all the Prophets and Messengers of Allāh; however, our Prophet (ﷺ) has a special status in this regard. Hence, we should love him more than we love any other person, including our children, parents, relatives and even our own selves. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ كَانَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ كُلُّمَا وَلِخَوْنَكُمْ وَلِزَوْجَكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالُ أَهْلَقَتُمُوهَا وَبَخِرَةُ مَخْرُونَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسْكِنُ تَرْضُونَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ أَنَّهُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَجَهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرْبَصُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْفَى اللَّهُ بِأَشْرِيفِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّفِيقَينَ ﴾  
Say, [O Muhammad], "If your fathers<sup>(1)</sup>, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased, are more beloved to you than Allāh, His Messenger and striving in His cause—then wait until Allāh executes His Command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people". (al-Tawbah: 24).

Thus, Allāh paired the love for Himself with the love for His Messenger (ﷺ), and subsequently threatened anyone who loves his wealth, family and children more than he loves Allāh or His Messenger by saying, "Then wait until Allāh executes His Command. And Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people".

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1- Or your parents (Cf. al-Sa'di, *Tafsīr* p. 292).

According to Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) once said,  
 لا يؤمن أحدكم حقاً كون أحب إليه من والده وولده والناس أجمعين.  
**None of you can be true believer, unless he loves me more than he loves his parents, his children and the people in general.** (*Bukhārī*: 15; *Muslim*: 44).

In the same context, ‘Umar bin al-Khaṭṭab (رضي الله عنه) was reported to have addressed the Prophet (ﷺ) saying, "O Allāh's Messenger, you are dearer to me than any other thing except my own self." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "**By Him (Allāh) in whose Hand is my life! That is not enough, until I become beloved to you even than your own self!**". ‘Umar then said to him, "**I swear by Allāh that now you are more beloved to me even than my own self!**" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "**Now, O ‘Umar [You have just said what you are expected to say as a believer<sup>(1)</sup>]!**". (*Bukhārī*: 6632, on the authority of ‘Abdullah bin Hishām).

**4-** To give him due respect, befitting honour and reverence, these are all part of his rights as enjoined by Allāh (ﷻ) in His Glorious Book. Allāh says,

﴿لَوْمُوا بِالله وَرَسُولِهِ وَفَتَرَاهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ﴾  
 (3) (2)  
 ﴿أَن تَعْبُدُوا بِالله وَرَسُولِهِ وَفَتَرَاهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ﴾

**That you [people] may believe in Allāh and His Messenger, and honour him and respect him [i.e. the Prophet (ﷺ)].** (*al-Fath*: 9).

1- See *Ibn Hajar, Fathu al-Bārī* vol. xi, p. 536 (Translator)

2- i.e. honour him, according to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما). This may also mean, in the opinion of Qatādah, 'support him'.

3- i.e. respect him, according to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما). Qatādah also interpreted this to mean an order from Allāh that the Prophet (ﷺ) must be made the leader.

﴿فَالَّذِينَ مَأْسَوْا لِيْهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَأَقْبَلُوا أَنُورُ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ، أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

So they who have believed in him [the Prophet (ﷺ)], honoured him, supported him and followed the Light which was sent down with him – it is those who will be the successful. (al-A'raf: 157).

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ مَاءَسُوا لَا تُقْدِمُوا بَيْنَ يَدِيِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ﴾

O you who believe, do not put [yourselves] before Allāh and His Messenger. (al-Hujurāt: 1).

﴿لَا جَحَّلُوا دُعَائَةَ الْأَرْسُلِ يَتَسَمَّعُ كُلُّهُ عَوْنَاقٌ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا﴾

Do not make [your] calling of the Messenger among you as your calling of one another. (al-Nūr: 63).

The import here, according to Mujāhid - a well-known scholar of the Qur'ānic exegesis, is that "Allāh commanded them to say, humbly and gently, 'O Messenger of Allāh' whenever they needed to call his attention, and not to say, in a grim and unbecoming manner, 'O Muhammad'.

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ on their part, have presented highly remarkable examples of how to respect him (ﷺ). One of them, Usāmah bin Shuraik (رضي الله عنه) said, "I came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and found him surrounded by his Companions [who looked so calm and in awe of him] as if there were birds resting over their heads".

Honouring the Prophet (ﷺ) has not ceased with his death, but continues even after his demise. A prominent Muslim Scholar, Qādi 'Iyād says accordingly, "Let it be known to you that giving due respect, honour and reverence to the Prophet (ﷺ) after his death, is as

compulsory as giving the same to him while he was alive. This applies specifically whenever his name is mentioned, or his *Sunnah* and *hadīth*s are recited, or when one hears his biography. Similarly, we should –out of our respect for the Prophet (ﷺ)– maintain good relations with his immediate and extended family, and honour both his relations and companions".

5- Invoking Allāh's peace and blessing on the Prophet (ﷺ) very often is another duty we owe him, and even an order from Allāh, the Almighty, who has said,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلِّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ كَأَنَّهَا الْأَوْرَكَ مَا مَنَّا صَلَّوْا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

Indeed, Allāh confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who believe, ask [Allāh to confer] blessing upon him, and ask [Allāh to grant him] peace. (*al-Ahzāb*: 56).

A Muslim linguist called al-Mubarrid said, "The word '*salāh*' [mentioned in the above verse] originally denotes asking [Allāh] to bless someone. Hence, the word implies [conferring] mercy, on the part of Allāh (ﷻ), but affection and request for such a blessing from Him on the part of the angels". ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr bin al-‘Āṣ (رضي الله عنهما) narrated that Allāh's Messenger said,

(من صلَّى عَلَيْهِ صَلَّاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ بِهَا عَشْرًا).

"Anyone who asks [Allāh to confer] a blessing on me, Allāh will recompense him/her with tenfold blessings". (*Muslim*: 384).

In another *hadīth*, Husain bin ‘Ali bin Abi Tālib (رضي الله عنهما) also quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(البخل الذي من ذكرت عنده فلم يصلّ علیْ).

The [real] miser is he who hears my name being mentioned, but does not ask [Allāh to confer] on me blessings. (*Sunan Tirmidhi*: 3546, vol. v, p. 551; *Musnad Ahmad*, vol. i, p. 201<sup>(1)</sup>).

Asking Allāh to confer peace and blessing on someone is recommended generally in favour of all the Prophets as we have mentioned earlier. However, it is more emphatically established in the case of our Prophet (ﷺ), as one of the most important obligations owed him by his followers; hence, we have seen it fit to make special mention of that here. Muslim scholars have stated this religious obligation unequivocally, while some even recorded unanimous agreement on it. A prominent scholar and jurist, Qadi 'Iyād, said in this connection, "Be informed that invoking [Allāh's] blessings upon the Prophet (ﷺ) is, by and large, a religious obligation, which is not restricted to a particular time. The order from Allāh in this respect implies obligation, in the opinion of the Muslim leaders and scholars, who have unanimously agreed on this".

6- Acknowledging all his firmly established outstanding traits, excellent characteristics and high status, whether those we have mentioned earlier in this book, or other traits and qualities that are equally proved in the Islamic texts. One should accept all this as true and use the said traits and characteristics to extol the Prophet (ﷺ). In addition, we must get this spread among the people and teach the same to our young ones, who should also be taught to love their

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1- This is a "*hasan-sahīh gharib*" *hadīth*, according to *Tirmidhi*.

Prophet (ﷺ), honour him and be cognizant of his high position in the sight of Allāh (ﷻ).

7- Avoidance of excess in the course of honouring the Prophet (ﷺ). Care must be taken not to fall into this pitfall, as it amounts to a most dangerous harm to the person of the Prophet himself. Here is how Allāh commanded his Prophet (ﷺ) to address his followers:

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّنْكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْنَا إِنَّهُمْ كُلُّهُمْ إِلَهٌ وَّمَا يُنْجِدُ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ لِي بِعْدَهُ وَمَنْ يَهْدِي إِلَيْنَا فَأُنْهِيَ إِلَيْهِ إِنَّمَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْنَا ﴾

**Say, 'I am only a man like you, to whom has been revealed that your god is One God. So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord – let him do righteous deed, and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone'.** (al-Kahf: 110).

﴿ قُلْ لَا أَوْلَئِكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ إِنِّي أَنْجِعٌ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْنَا ﴾

**Say, 'I do not tell you that I have the treasures of Allāh or that I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an angel. I only follow what is revealed to me'.** (al-An'ām: 50).

Thus, Allāh instructed His Prophet (ﷺ) to declare to his nation that he was merely sent by Him, and that he neither possessed any quality of Lordship, nor was he an angel. Rather, he followed the order and revelation of his Lord. The Prophet (ﷺ) himself has cautioned his adherents against excess in their approach whether to his person, or to his praise and commendation. 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) quoted him as saying,

(لَا تُطَرُّوْنِي كَمَا اطَّرَتِ النَّصَارَى إِنِّي مُرْسَمٌ فَإِنَّمَا أَنَا عَبْدٌ، فَلْقُولُوا، عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهِ).

**Do not extol me in a way similar to what the Christians have said concerning Ibn Maryam (i.e. Jesus the son of Mary); I am only a**

**servant of Allāh. You should therefore say (accordingly), 'A servant of Allāh and His Messenger'.** (*Bukhāri*: 3445<sup>(1)</sup>).

Ibn al-Athīr, the renowned linguist and scholar, opined that '*Itrā*', being the Arabic word used in the above *hadīth*, means, precisely, giving an undue praise to someone or something.

In a separate narration, Ibn 'Abbās (ابن عبّاس) رضي الله عنه said, "A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and after discussing with him certain issues he (the man) said, '[Such would be,] if Allāh and you will'. The Prophet (ﷺ) reacted to this by saying, "**Have you made me a peer of Allāh! Rather, what Allāh alone wills [shall be]**". (*Musnad Ahmad*, vol i, p. 214<sup>(2)</sup>).

Here, the Prophet (ﷺ) warned against excess regarding his person, which would mean placing him above his human status and ascribing to him part of Almighty Allāh's exclusive qualities. This also represents an indirect warning against any other form of excess not mentioned above; exceeding the limits set for our approach to the person of the Prophet or his praise, in whatever way, is unlawful.

Some forms of this excess amount to associating partners with Allāh (ﷻ), such as when a person turns to the Prophet in supplication and say, 'O Messenger of Allāh, do so and so for me'. This is evidently a supplication (*du'a'*), and supplication is an act of worship that must be directed to none but Allāh (ﷻ) alone.

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1- An almost identical version occurs as well in *Musnad Ahmad*, vol. i, p. 23.

2- An almost identical version occurs as well in *Sunan Ibn Mājah*: 2117.

Other facets of excess regarding the person of the Prophet (ﷺ) include:

- Offering sacrificial animal in his name.
- Making a vow for him.
- Performing ritual circumambulation round his grave, or facing the grave during *salah* (prayer) or any other act of worship.

All this is unlawful, as those acts constitute acts of worship, which Allāh has ordered to be dedicated to Him alone and not to any created being. Allāh says,

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَصَنْعِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمْاتِي دِينُ رَبِّ الْكَلَبِينَ ﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ فِي دِينِكَ  
أَمْرَتُ وَإِنَّا أَوْلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

Say, 'Indeed, my prayer, my service of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allāh, Lord of the worlds. No partner has He. And this I have been commanded, and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims'. (al-An'ām: 162, 163).

8- It is part of our obligations towards the Prophet (ﷺ) to love and support his companions and relations- including his wives, and not to use degrading or insulting language for them. This is because Allāh has enjoined on the Muslims to love and support the Companions of his Prophet (ﷺ), as He has also encouraged the generations after them to beseech Him to forgive the Companions' sins, and not to put in their hearts any resentment towards those Companions of their Prophet (ﷺ).

Thus, Allāh (ﷻ) said after he had mentioned the *Muhājirūn*<sup>(1)</sup> and the *Ansār*<sup>(2)</sup> among the Companions (ﷺ),

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوكُم مِّنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَغْفِرْ لَنَا إِلَّا هُنَّ أَنْذِرُوا إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَيْكُمْ لَا تَجْعَلُ فِي قُلُوبِ أَغْلَى لِلَّذِينَ مَانُوكُمْ إِنَّكَ رَبُّ الْعِزَّةِ رَحِيمٌ﴾

And those who came after them say, 'Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith and put not in our hearts rancour towards those who have believed. Our Lord, You are indeed, Kind and Merciful'. (al-Hashr: 10).

He also said concerning the relatives and the household of His Messenger (ﷺ),

﴿فَلَا أَخْلَقُ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمُوَدَّةُ فِي الْقُرْبَى﴾

Say, 'I do not ask you for it [i.e. the Message I have brought] any reward, except goodwill due to [my] kinship [with you]'. (al-Shurā: 23).

According to some, this verse may also be interpreted as follows, "Say to those believers who have followed you, 'I do not request any payment from you in return for what I have brought to you, except that you love my relatives'."

Zayd bin Arqam (ﷺ) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) once stood up and addressed the people saying,

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1- i.e. the Emigrants; those who emigrated from Makkah to Madinah at the instance of the Prophet (ﷺ). (Translator)

2- i.e. the Helpers; the Muslim inhabitants of the Madinah city at the time of the Hijrah or emigration. (Translator)

(أَمَا بَعْدُ إِلَّا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، فَإِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَأْتِي رَسُولُ رَبِّي فَأَجِيبُ وَإِنَّمَا تَارِكَنِي كُمْ نَقْلِينَ؛ أَوْ فَمَا كِتَابُ اللَّهِ فِيهِ الْهُدَى وَالنُّورِ، فَخَذُوهَا بِكِتابِ اللَّهِ وَامْتَحِنُوكُمْ بِهِ). فَفَحَّثَ عَلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَرَغَبَ فِيهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ: (وَأَهْلُ بَيْتِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، أَذْكُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، أَذْكُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي).

Now to our purpose. O you people! I am a human being [like you]. Perhaps I am about to receive the Messenger of my Lord [i.e. the angel of death] whom I shall answer. [But] I am leaving among you two weighty things, the first of which is the Book of Allah (i.e. the Glorious Qur'aan) that contains guidance and light. So stick to the Book of Allāh and hold fast to it. [Thus, he urged us to hold fast to the Book of Allāh and then said,] "And [the second thing is] my relations. I remind you [to fear] Allāh [regarding your duties] towards my relations. I remind you [to fear] Allāh [regarding your duties] towards my relations. I remind you [to fear] Allāh [regarding your duties] towards my relations". (*Muslim*: 2408).

In this way, the Prophet (ﷺ) did command us to be kind to his family and to value their worth and rights very highly, in recognition of their honour and relation to him. He has equally advised us to treat his Companions with respect, and warned against abusing or insulting any of them. Abū Sa'īd al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(لَا تُسْبِوا أَصْحَاحَنِي فَلَوْلَا أَحَدُكُمْ مِثْلُ أَحَدِ ذَهَبًا مَا بَلَغَ مَدْ أَحَدِهِمْ وَلَا نَصِيفَهُ).

Do not abuse my Companion, for if any of you should spend [in Allāh's cause] an amount of gold that is as huge as *Uhud*<sup>(1)</sup>, that

I- A mountain on the outskirts of Madinah. (Translator)

would not be equal to the reward of even a *mudd*<sup>(1)</sup> or half *mudd* spent by one of them. (*Bukhāri*: 3673, *Muslim*: 2541<sup>(2)</sup>).

It has always been a basic and undisputed principle of the Orthodox Sunni Muslims (*Ahl al-Sunnah*) to love the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), as well as his relatives and wives. They see the defamation of any or all of the Companions as a mark of aberration and straying from the right path. Said Abū Zur'ah, a notable Muslim scholar, "If you see a man making disparaging remark about a Companion of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), then you should know that he is a heretic". Another erudite Scholar, Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal also said, "If you see a man using a degrading language for a Companion of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), you should be suspicious of the man's claim to be a Muslim".

The foregoing is only brief presentation of part of the rights owed the Prophet (ﷺ) by his followers. May Allāh (ﷻ) guide us and our Muslim brothers, so that we may fulfil our obligations in this respect.

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1- A *mudd* in measurement approximately consists of 543 grams of grain or the like. (Translator)

2- The *hadīth* as quoted above has been taken from the *Bukhāri*'s book.

### (c) Elaborating on the veracity of seeing the Prophet (ﷺ) in a dream

The contingency of seeing the Prophet (ﷺ) while sleeping has been established through evidences in the *Sunnah*. The implication thereby is that whoever sees him in a dream, has truly seen his person, and not someone else resembling him. According to Abū Hurairah (رض), the Prophet (ﷺ) himself has said,

(من رأى في النّام فقد رأى. فإنَّ الشّيْطانَ لَا يَمْثُلُ بِي).

**Anyone who saw me while sleeping has, in reality, seen me as a person. Satan (the Devil) cannot imitate my personality.** (*Muslim*: 2266). Another version of the *hadīth* also narrated by Abū Hurairah (رض) reads as follows,

(من رأى في النّام فسِيرَاني في البَقْلَةِ، وَلَا يَمْثُلُ الشّيْطانُ بِي).

**Whoever saw me in a dream, shall also see me while he is awake [i.e. with his own eyes]. Satan cannot impersonate my identity.** (*Bukhāri*: 6993; *Muslim*: 2266).

Imam Bukhāri, who transmitted this *hadīth*, added that the narrator, Ibn Sirīn remarked, "provided that the person has seen him in his real form". Jābir bin 'Abdullah (رض) also quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(من رأى في النّوم فقد رأى فإنه لَا ينْبغي للشّيْطانَ أَنْ يَتَشَبَّهُ بِي).

**Whoever saw me while asleep – no doubt, he has seen me as a person. It is improper for Satan to assume my identity.** (*Muslim*: 2268).

Based on the contents of the above *hadīths*, it is feasible to see the Prophet (ﷺ) in a dream, and whoever does, he/she has actually seen none but the Prophet (ﷺ) himself, for Satan has been incapacitated to assume his shape. However, we should be mindful of the fact that the true vision being referred to in these *hadīths* is

applicable only when the person has seen the Prophet (ﷺ) in his real shape, based on what is known of his qualities and description. The statement by Ibn Sirīn, as quoted above, precisely touched on this point. Imam Bukhārī also intentionally mentioned the statement after the *hadīth* immediately, with the aim of clarifying the nature of the vision reported in the *hadīth*. Also conforming to this is another narration by al-Hākim on the authority of ‘Āsim bin Kulaib who said, "I was informed by my father that he said to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), 'I have seen the Prophet (ﷺ) in a dream'. Ibn ‘Abbās said, 'Describe him to me'. Kulaib, the original narrator continued, 'I then mentioned al-Hasan bin ‘Ali (رضي الله عنهما), citing his resemblance to the Prophet (ﷺ). Ibn ‘Abbās then remarked, "He, truly, resembled him". (*Al-mustadrak* vol. iv, p. 393<sup>(1)</sup>).

Another narrator called Ayyūb said, "Whenever a man informed Muhammad ibn Sirīn<sup>(2)</sup> that he had seen the Prophet (ﷺ) [in a dream], he would ask him to describe for him whom he saw. If the description proves alien to what he (Ibn Sirīn) knows, he would then say, 'You have not seen the Prophet (ﷺ)'." Ibn Hajar, who reported this in his book: *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, classified the chain of transmission as sound.

**On the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), "Whoever saw me in a dream, shall also see me while he is awake [i.e. with his own**

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1- This is a *sahīh hadīth*, according to both Hākim and Dhahabi. Ibn Hajar also judged the chain of transmission as *‘ayyid* (good).

2- He is the same Ibn Sirīn mentioned earlier in this chapter - a well-known Muslim scholar who died in the second century of the Hijra (Muslim calendar). (Translator)

eyes]", Muslim scholars have expressed different opinions concerning the import of the last clause in the *hadīth*. The most famous of these views are as follows:

1- The vision mentioned in that clause is a mere comparison, that is, compared to what one sees with his own eyes. This view enjoys the support of another version of the same *hadīth*, which reads as follows:

(فَكَانُوا رَأَيْ فِي الْيَقْظَةِ).

**It is as if he has seen me while he was awake.** (Reported by *Muslim* on the authority of Abū Hurairah ﷺ).

2- Seeing the Prophet (ﷺ) with one's own eyes, as mentioned in the *hadīth*, has been peculiar to those of his contemporaries who believed in him even before they were privileged to catch sight of him.

3- The clause refers to what will happen on the Day of Resurrection, when those who have seen the Prophet (ﷺ) in a dream will be granted special privileges above those who have not. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

### 3.7 Prophet Muhammad's message as the final of all divine messages; hence, no Prophet shall come after him

The topic has been discussed earlier in this book, and the proofs thereof were mentioned when we talked about the characteristics of the Prophet (ﷺ), and that he was the last of all Prophets of Allāh. However, our discussion here shall focus on the impact this belief in the termination of divine messages with the coming of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) has on the Muslims' faith, and what they stand to gain in having such a belief. These include:

1- Finality of the Islamic legislation, perfection of the religion, as well and the great impact of both on the life of the Muslims. For these reasons, Allāh reminded us of His favour in this respect when He said,

﴿إِنَّمَا أَنْهَاكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَأَنْهَاكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَحْمَتِي لَكُمْ إِلَاتِّلَامٌ دِينًا﴾

This day I have perfected for you your religion, completed my Favour upon you, and have approved for you Islam as religion. (*al-Mā'idah*: 3).

This verse was revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ) during his farewell pilgrimage; just a few months prior to his death, at a time Allāh had completed for him the law of Islam. No wonder, the Jewish community used to envy the Muslims on account of what Allāh revealed in the verse. A narration by both Bukhāri and Muslim reveals that a Jew came to ‘Umar bin al-Khattāb (رضي الله عنه) and said, "Had that verse, which you read in your book, been revealed to us, i.e. Jews, we would have made the day it was revealed a festival". ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) asked, "Which verse is that"? The man replied, "**This day I have perfected for you your religion**". (*Bukhāri*: 45; *Muslim*: 3017).

The Prophet (ﷺ) himself portrayed this fact in a physical context by likening the past Messages before him to a well-built palace, with every component being intact, except for a place of one brick. Muhammad's Message was that missing brick and has since been used to complete the edifice. This apparently shows that Islam, and in fact all other divine messages as a whole, cannot, under any circumstances, accommodate any addition, as it is equally impossible to add any brick to that palace after it had been completely built. The *hadith* of "the brick" we now quote has been mentioned earlier when we discussed the characteristics of the Prophet (ﷺ). The reader may therefore refer to that section for details.

2- This creed instils in the Muslims confidence that neither their religion nor the law of their Prophet (ﷺ) could be abrogated or outdated with the coming of a new Prophet. The termination of prophet hood with the message of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) implies that no new Prophet shall further come and no new law will be sent after his prophet hood and his law. The coming of 'Īsa (Jesus ﷺ), even as he will maintain his status as a Prophet, does not contradict this fact. Jesus, in his second coming to this world (i.e. his descent from heaven before the Day of Resurrection), shall follow the law sent to Muhammad (may Allāh's peace and blessings be on both), and not his own former law which, in reality, has been abrogated. In other words, he shall be an adherent of the law of our Prophet, fundamental and non-fundamental aspects alike.

3- With this belief, Muslims will have no doubt whatsoever that whoever claims to be a Prophet after Muḥammad (ﷺ) is an outright liar. This represents a most notable benefit the Muslim community derive from the creed of the finality of prophet hood. They are protected thereby from falling into the trap of impostors who claim to be prophets. For this same reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) committed himself purposely and wilfully to warning his followers of the danger posed by those impostors, when he affirmed the belief in himself as the final Prophet of Allāh. In line with this, the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us of some thirty liars among the Muslim nation, who shall claim the status of a Prophet. He then made it known that no Prophet will be sent after him; thus, warning his followers not to believe in or follow those liars. This is contained in a *hadīth* narrated by Thawbān (رضي الله عنه) who quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

... وَإِنَّهُ سَيَكُونُ فِي أُمَّةٍ تَلَاقُواْ كُلُّهُمْ يَزْعُمُ أَنَّهُ نَبِيٌّ وَأَنَّ خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّنَ لَا نَبِيَ بَعْدِي ...  
Indeed, there will be among my nation thirty impostors who shall all claim to be prophets, while I am [in truth,] the last Prophet. No Prophet shall come after me. (*Sunan Tirmidhi*: 2219, vol. iv, p. 499<sup>(1)</sup>).

4- It is also clear from this that Muslim leaders and scholars occupy distinguished positions in the Muslim nation. Allāh (ﷻ) has entrusted them to govern the people and manage both their religious and worldly affairs, unlike the children of Israel whose affairs were solely run by their Prophets. Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

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1- The *hadīth* has been classified by Tirmidhi as "ḥasan-sahīḥ". Abū Dauḍ also reported a similar version on the authority of Abū-Hurairah (*Sunan Abū Dauḍ*: 4333, 4334, vol. iv p. 329).

(كانت بتو إسرائيل تسوهم الأنبياء كلما هلك نبي خلفه نبي، وإنه لا نبي بعدني، وستكونون خلفاء تكثرون). قالوا: فما تأمرنا؟ قال: (فروا بيعة الأول فالاول رأعطوهم حقهم فإن الله سائلهم عما استرعاهم).

**The children of Israel were ruled by their Prophets; each time a Prophet passed away he was succeeded by another. No Prophet shall come after me, but there will be successors who shall increase in number.** The audience asked, "What then would you order us to do"? He replied, "**Obey anyone that will be the first to whom a pledge of allegiance has been given, and give them (i.e. the rulers) their due rights. Allāh will ask them about what He has put under their custody**". (*Bukhārī*: 3455; *Muslim*: 1842<sup>(1)</sup>).

The position of Muslim rulers of this nation, in terms of governance and administration, is therefore equivalent to that of the Prophets among the children of Israel. Another *hadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) has it that,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعِثُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ عَلَىٰ رَأْسٍ كُلَّ مَا تَنَزَّلَتْ سَنَةٌ مِّنْ يَجْدُدُ لَهَا دِينُهَا).

**At the end of every hundred years, Allāh will bring forth for this nation whoever will reform its religion.** (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd*: 4291, vol. iv, p. 313; *al-Mustadrak* vol.iv, p. 522<sup>(2)</sup>).

The condition of the Muslim nation (*Ummah*) also testifies to this, as both religious and worldly affairs have always been ideally managed through those caliphs, rulers and scholars who handle the

1- The *hadīth* as quoted above has been taken from the book of *Muslim*.

2- This is a *zāhiḥ* (authentic) *hadīth*, according to both Ḥākim and Dhahabi.

people's affairs in accordance with the provisions of the law of Islam. Furthermore, Allāh (ﷻ) keeps renovating for the Muslim nation whatever has become obliterated of the landmarks of their religion throughout the ages. He does this through Muslim reformers who dissociate His Noble Book from distortions of the extremists, false claims by the impostors, and from the misinterpretation of those who are ignorant. Thus, Allāh's religion remains, through them, as fresh as ever; no matter how ancient the Message of the Prophet (ﷺ) has become. This is a favour that Allāh bestowed on this nation generally, and particularly on those whom He has honoured with such a responsibility.

At any rate, the belief in the termination of prophet hood and its impacts on religion are considered prominent features of this nation, which impart to it strong faith with certainty, positiveness, deep-rootedness and stability, until the time Allāh's order will come<sup>(1)</sup>.

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I- i.e. until the Day of Resurrection. (Translator)

### 3.8 The Messenger's Night Journey (*al-Isrā'*): Facts and proofs

**Definition:**

Linguistically, the word "*al-Isrā'*" is derived from another Arabic word "*isrā'*", which denotes either a journey for the whole night or for the most part of it. Hence, it is commonly said, "Saraytu" or "Astraytu" as derivable verbs. Ḥassān<sup>(1)</sup> said in some of his poetry,

أَسْرَتِ إِلَيْكُمْ لَيْلَةً شَرِيكَ

Meaning: "She travelled to you by night, and she has not been doing so before".

However, as an Islamic term, whenever the word "*isrā'*" is mentioned, nothing comes to mind but the Messenger of Allāh's night journey from the Sacred Mosque in Makkah to the Jeruslaem Mosque, and his returning trip the same night.

#### The reality and proofs of "*Isrā'*" (The Night Journey)

The Night Journey was a great sign Allāh has used to support the Prophet (ﷺ) before the emigration to Madīnah. He was taken for the journey by night from the Grand Mosque (*Al-Masjid al-Harām*) in Makkah, to the Far Distant Mosque (*Al-Masjid al-Aqṣā*) in Jerusalem. He rode the *Burāq*<sup>(2)</sup>, and was in the company of Angel Jibril (ﷺ). On arrival at Jerusalem, the Prophet (ﷺ) tied up his riding animal (*Burāq*) to the ring of the door of the mosque. He then entered the mosque and led other Prophets in prayer. Thereupon, Angel Jibril (ﷺ) brought him a drinking vessel containing wine, and another one

1- i.e. Hassan bin Thābit (رض), a Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ). (Translator)

2- i.e. a riding animal with this name. (Translator)

containing milk. The Prophet (ﷺ) chose the vessel of milk, and Jibril said to him, "You have been guided to the sound nature". Proofs from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* on the incident of the Night Journey include the following:

Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَنَا بِعَبْدِهِ وَلَمْ يَلِدْ مِنَ السَّمِيدِ الْحَكَارَ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي  
بَرَكَنَا حَوْلَهُ لِرُؤْيَةِ مِنْ مَا يَنْتَهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾.

Glorified is He [Allāh] who took His servant [Muhammad ﷺ] for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah] to the Far Distant Mosque [in Jerusalem], whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed He [Allāh] is the Hearing, the Seeing. (*al-Isrā'*: 1).

As for evidence from the *Sunnah*, Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(أَتَيْتُ بِالْبَرَاقَ (وَهُوَ دَابَّةٌ أَبْيَضٌ طَوِيلٌ فَوْقَ الْحَمَارِ وَدُونَ الْبَغْلِ يَضْعُفُ حَافِرَهُ عَنْدَ مَنْتَهِيِ  
طَرْفِهِ) [قَالَ]: فَرَكِبْتُهُ حَقَّ أَتَيْتُ بَيْتَ الْمَقْدَسِ. [قَالَ]: فَرَبِطْتُهُ بِالْحَلْقَةِ الَّتِي يَرْبِطُ بِهِ الْأَنْبَاءُ  
[قَالَ]: ثُمَّ دَخَلْتُ الْمَسْجِدَ فَصَلَّيْتُ فِيهِ رَكْعَيْنِ، ثُمَّ خَرَجْتُ فِي جَمَاجِعِنِي جَبَرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ  
يَاتِيَنِي مِنْ خَرْ رِبَانِيَّةٍ مِنْ لَبَنٍ فَأَخْتَرْتُ الْلَّبَنَ. فَقَالَ جَبَرِيلُ ﷺ: أَخْرُوتُ الْفَطْرَةَ).

*Al-Burāq*, a white tall animal that is bigger than a donkey but smaller than a mule, was brought to me. The animal's step [was so wide that it] reached the farthest point within the reach of its sight. I rode on its back till I reached Jerusalem. There, I tied it up to the ring, which was normally used for the same purpose by the [former] Prophets. Then, I entered the mosque and performed

two *raka'ahs*<sup>(1)</sup>. After that, I came out only to meet Jibril (ﷺ) coming to me with two drinking vessels; one of wine, and the other was of milk. I chose the [vessel of] milk, and Jibril said, 'You have chosen the [sound] nature<sup>(2)</sup>'. The *hadīth* continued with the account of how the Prophet (ﷺ), subsequently, ascended to heaven. (*sahīh Muslim*: 162).

The Prophet's (ﷺ) Night Journey has been mentioned in a number of *hadīths*, some of which are in the books of *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*<sup>(3)</sup>, as well as other compilations of the *hadīth*, including the *Sunan*<sup>(4)</sup>. About thirty of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) narrated these *hadīths*, while other narrators among Muslim scholars and traditionists are too many to be counted.

Muslims scholars throughout all ages never disputed the genuineness of the Night Journey. Moreover, some of them, like Qādī 'Iyād in his book *Al-Shifā*, and Safarīni in *Lawāmi' al-Anwār*, have reported consensus on this issue.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was fully awake when the journey took place; thus, he has engaged in it with both his body and spirit. This is what we are told in the authentic religious texts, and is also the opinion of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), as well as scholars of the *Ahl al-Sunnah* (The Orthodox Sunni Muslims) and their academic authorities.

1- A unit of the Muslims prayer (Ṣalāh) is called *raka'ah*. (Translator)

2- The contextual interpretation of the word "النَّبْعَةُ" or nature here would mean Islam and probity. See: Al-Nawawi's commentary on *sahīh Muslim* vol. ii, p. 212. (Translator)

3- i.e. the most authentic compilations of the *hadīths*.

4- i.e. the books of Tirmidhi, Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasā'i and Ibn Mājah.

In the words of Ibn Abi al-‘Izz al-Hanafī, a well-known scholar, "The *hadīth* of the Night Journey, according to the correct opinion, reveals among other things that the Prophet (ﷺ) was, physically and in a state of full consciousness, taken for the journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Far Distant Mosque". While confirming that this has been the view of all Muslim scholars among the Companions and the generations after them, another notable scholar, Qādī ‘Iyād also said, "In the opinion of the majority of our righteous predecessors (*Salaf*) and the Muslims generally, the Night Journey was that of the body which took place while the Prophet (ﷺ) was awake. This is the truth and was the view held by [the Prophet's Companions and their followers such as] Ibn ‘Abbās, Jābir, Anas, Hudhaifah, ‘Umar, Abū Hurairah, Mālik bin Ṣa’īd, Abū Habbah al-Badri, Ibn Mas’ūd, al-Dahhāk, Sa’īd bin Jubair, Qatādah, Ibn al-Musayyib, Ibn Shihāb, Ibn Zayd, al-Hasan, Ibrāhīm, Mārūq, Mujāhid, ‘Ikrimah and Ibn Juraij. It is also a proof to the opinion held by ‘Aishah (رضي الله عنها). Scholars like Tabari and Ahmad ibn Hanbal have similarly subscribed to this view. Furthermore, it is the opinion of a very large group of Muslims, and most of the later-date Muslim Jurists, Traditionists, Theologists and scholars of the Noble Qur’ān exegesis".

In a critique of the view that the Night journey took place twice, a well-versed Muslim scholar said, "The unerring view as held by the leading experts in the field of the *hadīth* is that the Night Journey took place only once, and that was in Makkah after the Prophet (ﷺ) had been sent as a Messenger of Allāh. What an odd view

is that which tries to portray the event as a recurring one! Besides, imagine how strange does it sound to assume that each time the event took place, fifty prayers were initially prescribed for the Prophet (ﷺ) but were later reduced to five after repeated movements between his Lord and Prophet Mūsa (ﷺ). While Allāh (ﷻ) would then say, 'I have decreed My obligation and reduced the burden for My servants', but would revert the number to fifty again the second time, and now start afresh to reduce it ten, ten"!

### Facts surrounding Prophet Muhammad's ascension to heaven

As far as the religious texts and the scholars' remarks are concerned, we can hardly separate the issue of the Prophet's ascension (*Mi'rāj*) from that of the Night Journey (*Isrā'*). Hence, for the benefit of the reader, it is pertinent that we define the term "*Mi'rāj*" now.

*Mi'rāj*, being a derivative of another Arabic word "'Urūj", means a ladder-like instrument used to ascend or climb something, even though we do not know how exactly the tool used by the Prophet (ﷺ) looked like.

As an Islamic term, *al-Mi'rāj* is strictly used to designate the ascension of the Prophet (ﷺ) together with Angel Jibrīl, from Jerusalem to the nearest heaven, and then to the other heavens up to the seventh one. It also comprises his seeing other Prophets in those heavens -each in his position, as well as his greeting to them and their welcoming him. After which he proceeded to the Lotus Tree of the Utmost Boundary (*Sidrat al-Muntahā*) where he saw Jibrīl in his real shape. Thereafter, on that very night, he received Allāh's injunction to

perform five daily obligatory prayers. Allāh communicated this to him directly in spoken words, then he descended back to the earth. Both his ascension to heaven and the Night Journey took place on the same night; as per the correct view regarding this issue.

The Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* contain proofs on the event of the Prophet's ascension. The Qur'ānic proofs in this regard include references to great signs witnessed by the Prophet (ﷺ) on that important night. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ أَفَمِنْزُولٌ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ ﴾١٧ ﴿ وَلَقَدْ رَأَهُ تَرْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴾١٨ ﴿ عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَقَىٰ ﴾١٩ ﴿ عِنْدَ هَاجَةَ الْأَنْوَافِ ﴾٢٠ إِذْ يَعْنِي أَلْيَادَةَ مَا يَعْشَىٰ ﴾٢١ ﴿ مَا زَاغَ الظَّهَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ﴾٢٢ ﴿ لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ كُلِّ كَيْتَ رَبِيعٍ ﴾٢٣ ﴿ أَكْبَرَهُ ﴾٢٤

Will you then dispute with him [Muhammad ﷺ] over what he saw. And indeed, he saw him [i.e. Jibril ﷺ] in another descent. At the Lotus Tree of the Utmost Boundary. Near it is the Garden of Resort [i.e. Paradise]. When that which covers did cover the lotus tree. The sight [of the Prophet (ﷺ)] did not swerve, nor did it transgress [its limit]. Indeed, he saw of the greatest signs of his Lord. (al-Najm: 12-18).

Allāh mentioned in the above verses those of His great signs He had honoured His Messenger (ﷺ) to view on the night of his ascent. Such as seeing Angel Jibril near the Lotus Tree of the Utmost Boundary, and viewing the tree itself being covered with what covered it of Allāh's order, i.e. golden butterflies, according to both Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) and Masrūq<sup>(١)</sup>.

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١- Masrūq is a renowned scholar of the *Tābi'i* generation. (Translator)

Details of the Prophet's ascent to heaven are given in a number of *hadīths*, including the aforementioned one narrated by Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه). In addition to what we have quoted earlier from that *hadīth* concerning the Prophet's Night Journey, it contains as well an account of what happened during his ascension to heaven. The Prophet (ﷺ) said further,

(ثُمَّ عَرَجْنَا إِلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ فَاسْتَفْتَحْ جَبَرِيلَ. قَالَ: مَنْ أَنْتَ؟ قَالَ: جَبَرِيلٌ. قَالَ: وَمَنْ مَعَكَ؟ قَالَ: مُحَمَّدٌ. قَالَ: وَقَدْ بَعَثْتَ إِلَيْهِ؟ قَالَ: قَدْ بَعَثْتَ إِلَيْهِ. فَفَتَحَ لَنَا فَإِذَا أَنَا بِآدَمَ فَرَحْبَ بِي وَدَعَا لِي بِخَيْرٍ. (ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ عَرْوَجَهُ إِلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَلَاقَاهُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ إِلَى أَنْ قَالَ): ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ بِي إِلَى سَدْرَةِ الْمُتَهَجِّيِّ وَإِذَا وَرَقْهَا كَآذَانِ الْفَيْلَةِ، وَإِذَا غَارَهَا كَالْقَلَالِ. قَالَ: فَلِمَّا غَشِيَّهَا مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ مَا غَشِيَّهَا تَغَرَّتْ. فَمَا أَحَدٌ مِنْ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ يُسْتَطِعُ أَنْ يَعْتَدِيَهَا مِنْ حَسَنَهَا. فَأَرْسَى اللَّهُ إِلَيْيَّ مَا أَوْحَى. فَقَرْضَنِي عَلَيْيَ حَسَنَ صَلَوةَ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ. فَنَزَّلَتْ إِلَيْيَ مُوسَى رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. قَالَ: مَا فَرَضْ رَبُّكَ عَلَيْيَ أَمْتَكَ؟ قَلَّتْ: حَسَنَ صَلَوةً. قَالَ: ارْجِعْ إِلَيْ رَبِّكَ فَاسْأَلْهُ التَّحْكِيفَ فَإِنْ أَمْتَكَ لَا يَطْلِقُونَ ذَلِكَ، فَلَمَّا قَدْ بَلَوْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَخَيْرَهُمْ. قَالَ: فَرَجَعْتُ إِلَيْ رَبِّي. فَقَلَّتْ: يَا رَبِّ خَفَّفْ عَلَيْيَ أَمْقَى. فَحَطَّ عَنِي حَسَانًا. فَرَجَعْتُ إِلَيْ مُوسَى. فَقَلَّتْ: حَطَّ عَنِي حَسَانًا. قَالَ: إِنْ أَمْتَكَ لَا يَطْلِقُونَ ذَلِكَ فَارْجِعْ إِلَيْ رَبِّكَ فَاسْأَلْهُ التَّحْكِيفَ. قَالَ: فَلَمَّا أَزَلْتُ أَرْجِعَ بَيْنَ رَبِّي تَبَارِكَ وَتَعَالَى وَبَيْنَ مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ حَتَّى قَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ. إِهْنَ حَسَنَ صَلَواتٍ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ لِكُلِّ صَلَوةٍ عَشَرٍ فَذَلِكَ حَسَنَ صَلَوةٍ (...).

We were thereafter lifted up to heaven, where Jibril, having demanded that the gate be opened, was asked to say who he was. He said, [I am] Jibril. He was also asked, 'Who is with you'? He replied, 'Muhammad'. After this, Jibril was asked, 'Has he [Muhammad (ﷺ)] been sent to [by Allāh]?', and he replied in the affirmative. Then, the gate was opened for us and I met Ādām who welcomed me and supplicated for me.

The Prophet (ﷺ) continued to describe his ascent to heaven and how he met other Prophets there, until he said, "Then, Jibrīl took me to the Lotus Tree of the Utmost Boundary, whose leaves are like the ears of an elephant, while the fruits thereof looked like jars. When the tree became covered with what covered it of Allāh's order, it was then in a different shape; so beautiful that none of Allāh's creation could describe its prettiness. Thereupon, Allāh revealed to me His revelation, and commanded me to perform prayer fifty times a day. I descended until I met Mūsā (ﷺ), who asked me, 'What did your Lord enjoin on your followers'?. I said, 'Fifty prayers'. He remarked, 'Go back to your Lord and beseech Him to reduce the number; your people cannot bear such an obligation. I say this based on my experience with [my people] the Children of Israel'. I returned to my Lord and said, 'O my Lord, reduce [the number of the prayers you have enjoined] on my followers'. He therefore cut the number down to forty-five. I went back to Mūsā and said, 'The number has been reduced by five'. Again, Mūsā said, 'Your people would not be able to comply with such an order. Go back to your Lord and beg for more reduction'. The Prophet (ﷺ) added, "I kept going and coming between my Lord (ﷻ) and Mūsā (ﷺ) [asking for more reduction] until Allāh said, 'O Muhammad, now they are just five prayers every day and night, but each shall be tenfold [in reward]; making the total [again] fifty prayers'..." (*Muslim*: 162).

There are other versions of this story, not too different in content, narrated by Mālik bin Ṣa'īdah, Abū-Dharr and Ibn 'Abbās, and are all recorded in the two *sahīhs*<sup>(1)</sup>, as well as other *hadīth* compilations.

### Important Note:

The Prophet's Night Journey and ascension to heaven are both part of the great signs Allāh used to honour him (ﷺ). Our duty as Muslims is to believe in them as true phenomena, constituting important virtues given exclusively to our Prophet (ﷺ), among all other Messengers of Allāh. However, it is unlawful for any Muslim to commemorate the day of the Night Journey and the Prophet's ascension to heaven (*Iṣrā'* and *Mi'rāj*). It is similarly illicit to perform special prayers on this occasion, as done today by some Muslim laymen. Rather, such an act amounts to a detestable innovation, which was neither authorized by the Prophet (ﷺ) nor practised by any of our worthy predecessors. Moreover, it is not even the view of any scholar whose example deserves to be followed.

The *Ahl al-Sunnah* scholars have described the so-called special prayer on the eve of Rajab 27<sup>th</sup> and the likes, as part of the heresies added to Allāh's religion. They further declared it an unlawful act in the opinion of all the leading Muslim scholars. Hence, none but an ignorant heretic would introduce such a practice. The Messenger (ﷺ) has said,

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1- i.e. the books of *Bukhāri* and *Muslim*. (Translator)

(من أحدث في أمرنا هذا ما ليس منه فهو رد).

**Whoever invents in this religion of ours something alien to it, such an innovation shall be handed back to him [i.e. rejected]. (*Muslim*: 2697).**

### 3.9 The truth about the life of the Prophets (عليهم السلام):

It has been confirmed in many Islamic proofs that all the Prophets of Allāh, with the exception of some, have died. The exception we referred to above is also based on some other proofs. ‘Isa (Jesus) (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ), for instance, did not die, but was raised up alive to Allāh in heaven, as we shall later explain.

Proofs concerning the demise of Allāh's Prophets include the following:

Allāh (عز وجل) says,

﴿أَمْ كُنْتُ شَهِيدًا إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتَ﴾

**Or were you present when death approached Ya‘qūb [Jacob].** (al-Baqarah: 133).

﴿وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ يُوسُفَ مِنْ قَبْلِ إِلَيْتُكُمْ فَمَا رَأَيْتُمْ فِي شَرِيكٍ مَّا جَاءَكُمْ بِهِ حَقًّا إِذَا هَلَكَ فَلَمَّا تَرَكَ لَنْ يَعْصِمَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ رَسُولًا﴾

And Yūsuf [Joseph] had already come to you before with clear proofs, but you remained in doubt concerning what he brought to you, until when he died, you said, 'Never will Allāh send a Messenger after him'. (Ghāfir: 34).

He also said of His Prophet, Sulaiman (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ),

﴿فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَرَكُمْ عَلَى مَرْيَوْهٍ إِلَّا دَاهِةً الْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنْ كَلْمَةٍ﴾

**And when We decreed for him death, nothing indicated to them his death except a creature of the earth<sup>(1)</sup> eating his staff.** (Saba': 14).

Similarly, Allāh addressed Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) saying,

1- i.e., a woodworm or termite. (Translator)

﴿إِنَّكُمْ مَيْتُونَ وَإِنَّمَا مُمْسِكُكُمْ بِأَعْيُنِكُمْ﴾

**Indeed, you are to die, and they, certainly, are to die [as well].** (al-Zumar: 30).

Some scholars of the Qur'anic exegesis see in the above verse a sort of notification for the Prophet (ﷺ) about his death, which was then forthcoming, and for his adherents and antagonists alike, about an inevitable end of their lives. The verse therefore, informed the Companions (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) was also bound to die. Moreover, Allāh (ﷻ) has said, in even a more general tone, as He speaks of the death of every created soul,

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ﴾

**Every soul shall taste death.** (Al-'Imrān: 185).

Thus, the aforementioned verses are proofs to the fact that the Prophets (عليهم السلام) also die, just like all other human beings, except for 'Īsa [Jesus] (ﷺ), of whose accent to Allāh (ﷻ) He has informed us. He says,

﴿إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَكْبِرُ عَسَى أَنْ يُنَزَّلَكَ وَرَأَيْتُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُظْهَرُكَ مِنَ الظُّرُورِ كَفَرْتُ بِكَ﴾

And [remember] when Allāh said, 'O 'Īsa, indeed I will take you and cause you to ascend to Myself, and I will cleanse you of those who disbelieve'... (Al-'Imrān: 55).

This verse evidently indicates that Allāh (ﷻ) did raise 'Īsa (ﷺ) body and soul to heaven, and that he had never parted with life. Ibn Jarīr al-Tabārī, an erudite scholar of the Qur'anic exegesis has contextually explained the word "﴿أُرْفَهُ﴾" used in the verse to mean 'causing him to ascend to Allāh', while majority of other experts in the field hold the view that a more relevant rendering should be 'causing him to sleep'. This latter viewpoint has a similitude in another verse, where Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿أَللهُ يَتَوَفَّ الْأَنفُسَ جِينَ مَوْتَهَا وَإِلَيْهَا تُرْجَعُ فِي مَنَامِهَا﴾

Allāh takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that have not [yet] died, [He takes] during their sleep. (al-Zumar: 42). It is therefore incontestable that ‘Isa (Jesus) (ﷺ) is alive now in the heaven, even though Allāh has informed us of the subsequent death, which is bound to seize him too before the Hour of Resurrection. He says,

﴿وَإِنْ هُنَّ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيَوْمَنِ يُبْعَدُونَ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِمْ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا﴾

And there is none of the People of the Book [Jews and Christians] but that he will surely believe in him<sup>(1)</sup> [i.e. ‘Isa - Jesus] before his death. And on the Day of Resurrection he will be, against them, a witness. (al-Nisā’: 159).

The phrase "his death" in the above verse refers to that of ‘Isa (Jesus) (ﷺ) after his return to earth at the End of Time, when he shall break the cross, kill all pigs and abolish the *Jizyah*<sup>(2)</sup>. These are all proved in those authentic *hadīths* that mention Prophet ‘Isa's (Jesus) return to earth at the End of Time, as recorded either in the two *sahīh* compilations or other *hadīth* literatures.

It is also believed in some Muslim academic quarters that Prophet Idrīs (Enoch) has never breathed his last, but, like Jesus عليهما السلام, was caused by Allāh to ascend to Himself. Subscribers to this view cite the following Qur'ānic verse as a piece of evidence:

1- i.e. as a servant of Allāh and His blessed Messenger, and as a human being; not lord or son of the Lord. (Translator)

2- *Jizyah* is the money payable by certain categories of the non-Muslims in a Muslim state, or under the protection of the Muslim government. Jesus's abolition of the *Jizyah* is necessary, as no one by then would have any excuse to remain an unbeliever. (Translator)

﴿ وَذَكِّرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِذْرِيزَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صَدِيقًا لِّيٌّ وَرَفِعْنَاهُ مَكَانًا عَلَيْهِ ﴾

And mention in the Book, Idrīs (Enoch). Indeed, he was a man of truth and a Prophet. And We raised him to a high station. (Maryam: 56,57).

Mujāhid, a well-known Muslim scholar said, "Idrīs was raised up just as 'Isa was also raised up, and had never died". However, in the opinion of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), "He was raised up to heaven, where he [later] died". Some also claim that he was raised to the Fourth Heaven; the exact knowledge of this belongs to Allāh alone. Nevertheless, the point we intend to make here is that Muslim scholars have different views regarding the death of Prophet Idrīs (ﷺ), but one certain thing is, had he not really died before, a day must certainly come when he too will breath his last. The proof to this is a saying by Allāh (ﷻ) that,

﴿ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَاقَتْ الْمَوْتَ ﴾

**Every soul must have a taste of death.** (Al-'Inrān: 185).

Apart from Prophets 'Isa and Idrīs, no one of the other Messengers has an unceasing existence. This has been the view of all responsible Muslim scholars, and the above-mentioned proofs as well as the visible fact show that they all died in reality.

The religious texts in this connection contain certain expressions whose understanding proves difficult to some people. An example of this is what we read in those *hadīths* narrating the Prophet's ascension to heaven, that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw some other Messengers of Allāh and even had dialogues with them. This has come in a *hadīth* transmitted by both Bukhāri and Muslim on the authority of Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه), who quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(ثُمَّ عَرَجَ بَنِي إِلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ فَاسْفَعَهُ جِبْرِيلٌ فَقَبِيلٌ؛ مَنْ أَنْتَ؟ قَالَ جِبْرِيلٌ. قَبِيلٌ؛ وَمَنْ مَعَكَ؟ قَالَ مُحَمَّدٌ. قَبِيلٌ؛ وَقَدْ بَعَثْتَ إِلَيْهِ. قَالَ: قَدْ بَعَثْتَ إِلَيْهِ، فَفَعَلَ لَنَا. فَإِذَا أَنَا بِآدَمَ، فَرَحْبٌ يَرْدُعُنِي بَعْدِهِ، ثُمَّ عَرَجَ بَنِي إِلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ الْكَانِيَةِ فَاسْفَعَهُ جِبْرِيلٌ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَبِيلٌ؛ مَنْ أَنْتَ؟ قَالَ جِبْرِيلٌ. قَبِيلٌ؛ وَمَنْ مَعَكَ؟ قَالَ: مُحَمَّدٌ. قَبِيلٌ؛ وَقَدْ بَعَثْتَ إِلَيْهِ.. قَالَ: قَدْ بَعَثْتَ إِلَيْهِ، فَفَعَلَ لَنَا. فَإِذَا أَنَا بِابْنِي الْحَالَةِ عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمٍ وَعِجْيَى بْنِ زَكَرِيَّا صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمَا، فَرَحْبٌ يَرْدُعُنِي وَدَعْوَا لِي بَعْدِهِ).

We were thereafter lifted up to heaven, where Jibril, having demanded that the gate be opened, was asked to say who he was. He said, [I am] Jibril. He was also asked, 'Who is with you?' He replied, 'Muhammad'. After this, Jibril was asked, 'Has he [Muhammad (ﷺ)] been sent to [by Allāh]?', and he replied in the affirmative. Then, the gate was opened for us and I met Ādām who welcomed me and supplicated for me. After this we were to ascend to the second heaven, where Jibril also asked permission to enter. Again, he was asked who he was, and he said, 'Jibril'. Then, he was asked, 'Who is with you?', and he replied, 'Muhammad'. It was said, 'Has he been sent to'? Jibril said, '[Yes] he has been sent to'. Then, the gate was opened for us and I saw there the two cousins [of each other], 'Īsa Ibn Maryam [i.e. Jesus the son of Mary], and Yahyā [i.e. John] the son of Zakariyyā -May the blessings of Allāh be upon all of them. They both welcomed me and prayed for me. (*Bukhārī*: 3570; *Muslim*: 162).

The *hadīth* continued to narrate how the Prophet (ﷺ) met, in the third heaven, Prophet Yūsuf (Joseph) (ﷺ) who was given half the beauty of the whole mankind. He also saw Prophets Idrīs, Hārūn and Mūsa in the fourth, fifth and sixth heavens respectively, while in the seventh

heaven he saw Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) resting, with his back on the *Bait Ma'mūr*<sup>(1)</sup>. The Prophet (ﷺ) added that all of those Messengers he met received him hospitably and prayed for him.

Yet, Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) also narrated, according to both Bukhārī and Muslim's account, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(رأيت ليلة أسرى بي موسى رجلاً أدم طولاً كأنه من رجال شنوة، ورأيت عيسى رجلاً مربوعاً مربوعاً الخلق إلى الحمرة والبياض سبط الرأس...).

**On the night of my Night Journey, I saw Mūsa; a tall, brown-coloured man, as if he was one of the men of the *Shanūah*<sup>(2)</sup> clan. I also saw 'Isa (Jesus), who was a man of medium height and moderate complexion; inclined to the red and white colours, and was of lank hair.** (*Bukhārī*: 3239; *Muslim*: 165).

Some people erroneously see in these and other similar texts reasonable grounds for their claim of permanent existence for the Prophets. However, the truth is that every Prophet of Allāh has lived and died, except fro the two known cases of 'Isa (Jesus) -whose existence up till now is well confirmed in the religious texts- and Idrīs, whose existence now is still a controversial matter. Yet, as far as other Messengers and Prophets are concerned, there are proofs indicating, with all certainty, that they are all dead. We have mentioned some of these proofs already.

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1- i.e. the Frequented House in the heavens. (Translator)

2- *Shanūah* is the name of a clan in Yemen. Members of this clan are usually tall and thin. See: *Fatḥu al-Bārī* vol. vi, pp. 429, 485; *Sarḥu Nawawi 'ala Muslim* vol. ii, p.226. (Translator)

That the Prophet (ﷺ) did see the Messengers who came before him on the night of his ascent to heaven is likewise an incontestable fact, which in no sense contradicts the import of other authentic proofs. What he saw that night were the souls (spirits) of those Messengers depicted in what used to be their physical appearances. Their bodies -except where otherwise stated<sup>(1)</sup>- are, in reality on the earth in their respective graves. This is the view being held by the leading scholars of *Ahl al-Sunnah* (The Orthodox Sunni Muslims). One of those celebrated scholars has said in this respect, "Concerning his seeing other Prophets on the night of his ascent to heaven, where he saw Ādām in the nearest heaven, Yāhūya and 'Iṣa in the second heaven, Yūsuf in the third and Idrīs in the fourth. He also saw Hārūn in the fifth heaven, Mūsa in the sixth, and finally he caught sight of Ibrāhīm while in the seventh heaven, or perhaps in a reverse order. What he saw actually were their souls (spirits) portrayed in the forms of their bodies. Some people have suggested that perhaps the Prophet (ﷺ) saw the same bodies of those Messengers, which had been buried in their graves. This is, however, a very weak proposition. Nevertheless, 'Iṣa (ﷺ) did ascend to heaven with both his body and soul, and the same thing is being said of Idrīs, too. As for Ibrāhīm, Mūsa and others, they are on this earth, buried in their respective graves.

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I- As in the case of 'Iṣa (Jesus ﷺ) who was caused to ascend to heaven with his body and soul. (Translator)

It is important to add here that, just as Allāh (ﷻ) has honoured His Messengers by causing their souls to ascend to heavens, where they (i.e. the souls) now live in luxury as Allāh may wish, He has also preserved their bodies which remain on the earth, inside their graves. Thus, the earth has no decomposing effect on their bodies, as this has been authoritatively reported in a narration by Aws bin Aws (✉) who quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(إِنَّ مِنْ أَفْضَلِ أَيَامِكُمْ يَوْمُ الْجُمُعَةِ، فَأَكْثُرُوا عَلَيْهِ مِنِ الصَّلَاةِ فِيهِ، فَإِنَّ صَلَاتَكُمْ مَعْرُوضَةٌ عَلَيَّ). فَقَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَكَيْفَ تَعْرِضُ صَلَاتَنَا عَلَيْكَ وَقَدْ أَرْتَنَا؟ قَالَ: يَقُولُ: إِنِّي سَأَلِيَّتُ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ حَرَمَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ أَجْسَادَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ).

Indeed, Friday is one of the best days you have. Therefore, invoke on me as much as blessings you could on that day, for your invocation of blessings shall be displayed for me. The audience then said, 'O Allāh's Messenger, how could our invocations be displayed for you after your body might have been decomposed'? He replied (ﷺ), "**Indeed, Allāh (ﷻ) has barred the earth from [touching] the bodies of [His] Prophets**". (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. iv, p.viii; *Sunan Abū Dāwūd* vol. i, p. 443 *hadīth* no: 1047; *Sunan Dārimi* vol. i, p. 307 *hadīth* no: 1580<sup>(1)</sup>).

From the foregoing, the truth regarding this important issue has become clear, and so has the nature of the belief a Muslim must hold in this respect. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

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I- The chain of transmission is authentic, according to Imam Nawawi.

### 3.10 The Prophets' miracles compared to the *karāmahs*<sup>(1)</sup> of the righteous believers

#### Definition:

The word '*mu'jizah*' (i.e. miracle) is derived from '*qiz*', which means powerlessness. *Al-Qāmūs al-Muhibb*, the famous Arabic dictionary says accordingly, "The Prophet's miracle is anything he has used to render his opponents ineffective at the point of provocation. Linguistically, the Arabic word '*mu'jizah*' ends with letter 'h', which has been purposely added for mere intensiveness".

In technical terms, '*mu'jizah*' is a supernatural phenomenon that happens at the hands of Allāh's Prophets as a proof of their truthfulness, and survives any attempts to disprove it.

An analysis of the above stated definition would show that any natural or conventional thing is not covered by this definition, even though it may also happen at the hands of the Prophets. On the same account, any supernatural action or phenomenon performed by a non-Prophet cannot be classified as '*mu'jizah*'; hence, such acts by the *Awliyā'* (righteous or devoted believers) are called *karāmah*, as the *Awliyā'* themselves are subordinates of the Prophets. In addition, and even with all the more reason, what magicians and fortune-tellers practise of sorcery and the like, should also be excluded from the content of the definition; for those magical practices are only perpetrated by the most evil persons. Finally, the last clause in the

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I- *Karāmah* is a miracle performed by any righteous servant of Allāh, other than His Prophets and Messengers. (Translator)

definition, viz. "...as a proof of their truthfulness, and survives any attempts to disprove it" has been included with the aim of setting aside claims by impostors and sorcerers of certain supernatural acts, which are normally challenged or refuted by their counterparts.

### Examples of miracles performed by the Prophets

Many are the wonders performed by the Prophets. Prophet Śāliḥ's people, for instance, asked him to bring forth a she-camel from a rock. They even specified a particular rock for him and gave details of the specifications of that camel they wanted. Śāliḥ (ﷺ) supplicated to Allāh, who, in response, ordered that very rock to split open for a big she-camel, conforming totally to all standards and specifications they had mentioned in their request<sup>(1)</sup>. Allāh says with reference to this,

﴿وَإِن تَعُودُ أَخَافِعَمْ صَدِيقَهَا قَالَ يَنْقُولُونَ أَعْتَدْرَا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِهِ فَذَكَرَ اللَّهُ نَحْشُمْ بَيْتَهُ ثُنَّ رَبِيعَكُمْ هَذِهِ رَأْفَةُ اللَّهِ لِكُمْ مَا يَرِيدُونَ هَا تَأْكُلُنَّ فِي أَرْضِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَنْسُوهَا إِيُّوبُ فَيَأْخُذُكُمْ عَذَابُ أَلِيمٍ﴾

And to *Thamud* [We sent] their brother Śāliḥ. He said, O my people, worship Allāh; you have no god worthy of worship other than Him. There has come to you clear evidence from your Lord. This is the she-camel of Allāh<sup>(2)</sup> [sent] to you as a sign. So leave her to graze in Allāh's land, and do not touch her with harm, lest there seize you a painful punishment. (al-A'rāf: 73).

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1- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr* vol. iii, p. 436.

2- i.e. created by Allāh. (Translator)

The miracles given to Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) included the fire his people had kindled to punish him and to get rid of him, but was turned into coolness and a means of safety for Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) when he was thrown into it. Allāh says,

﴿ قَالُوا حَرْقُوهُ وَأَنْصِرُوهُ إِلَهُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَتَعْلِيمَةٌ ۝ قُلْنَا يَسْأَلُوكُمْ كُوْنِي بِرَبِّكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَةً عَلَىٰ ۝ إِنْ هُوَ بِشَيْءٍ ۝ وَلَرَدُوا يَوْمًا كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمُ الْأَخْسَرِينَ ۝﴾

They said, 'Burn him and support [i.e. take revenge for] your gods- if you are to act'. We [Allāh] said, 'O fire! Be coolness and safety for Ibrāhīm'. And they planned against him, but We made them the worst losers. (al-Anbiyā': 68-70).

Of Mūsa's miracles was the stick, which would transform into a big snake whenever he purposely cast it down. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَمَا تَلِكَ سِعِينِكَ يَنْمُوسُنِ ۝ قَالَ هِيَ عَصَابَىٰ أَنْوَكُوْنَا عَلَيْهَا وَأَهْسَنْ يَهَا عَلَىٰ ۝ عَنْيَىٰ وَلَيْ فَيْهَا مَنَارُبُّ أُخْرَىٰ ۝ قَالَ أَفَقَنْهَا فَلَذَا هِيَ حَيَّةٌ شَنَعَنِ ۝ قَالَ خَذْهَا وَلَا تَخَفْ سَعِيدُهَا يَسِيرُهَا الْأَوْلَىٰ ۝﴾

And what is that in your right hand , O Mūsa? He said, 'It is my stick; I lean upon it, and with it I beat down leaves for my sheep and I find in it other uses'. [Allāh] said, 'Cast it down, O Mūsa'. So he cast it down, and behold! It was a snake, moving quickly. [Allāh] said, 'Grasp it and fear not; We shall return it to its former state'. (Tā-Hā: 17-21).

Another miracle given to Mūsa (ﷺ) was that he used to insert his hand into his shirt, and then pull it out again while the hand would become white, shining like the moon without an indication of any harm or disease. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَأَخْضُمْ يَدَكَ إِنْ جَنَاحَكَ تَخْرُجْ بِيَضَّةٍ مِّنْ عَيْنِكَ سُوْءَةٌ مَا يَرَى﴾

And draw in your hand to your side; it will come out white without disease – being another sign. (Tâ-Hâ: 22).

'Isa's (Jesus's) miracles included his making, out of clay, figures like birds, which he would then breath into, and would become birds by Allâh's leave. He also used to rub over the born-blind and lepers, who would subsequently become healed of their disabilities by Allâh's permission. Furthermore, he used to call upon dead persons, who would answer him from their graves by Allâh's permission. Allâh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَإِذْ خَلَقْتَ مِنَ الطَّينِ كَهْيَةً أَطْلَقْتَ فِيْهَا رَحْنَكُونَ طَيْرًا يَأْذِنُ وَتَبَرَّعَ  
الْأَكْحَمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ يَأْذِنُ وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْقَى يَأْذِنُ﴾.

And when you made from clay [what was] like the form of a bird with My Permission, then you breathed into it and it became a bird with My Permission; and you healed the blind (from birth) and the leper with My Permission; and when you brought forth the dead with My Permission... (al-Mâ'idah: 110).

The Glorious Qur'ân was part of the miracles given to our Prophet (ﷺ), and it is the most magnificent of all the miracles given to the Messengers of Allâh. He says,

﴿وَإِنْ كُشِّفَتْ فِي رَبِّ مُّعَاذَنَّا عَلَى عَبْرِنَا فَأَثْوَرَ إِسْرَاقَ مِنْ فِشَلِهِ وَأَذْعُوا شَهَادَاتَكُمْ مِّنْ  
دُونِ الْقُرْآنِ كُشْرَ صَدَرِقَنَ﴾.

And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our servant [i.e. Muhammad (ﷺ)], then produce a *sûrah* the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allâh, if you should be truthful. (al-Baqarah: 23).

﴿ قُلْ لَئِنْ أَجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسَانُونَ وَالْجِنُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِيَمِيلٍ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِيَمِيلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِيَعْضُلَ طَهِيرًا ﴾

Say, 'If mankind and *jinn* gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another'. (*al-Isrā'*: 88).

That the moon split in two, upon the request of the people of Makkah, was also a miracle given to the Prophet (ﷺ). The splitting of the moon was witnessed not only by the inhabitants of Makkah, but also by other people elsewhere. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ أَفَرَبَّ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ① قَدْ نَبَرُوا مِنْهُ بُرْصُوا وَيَقُولُوا يَسْحَرُ مُسَيْرُ ﴾

The Hour [of Judgement and Resurrection] has come near and the moon split. And if they see a sign, they turn away and say, 'Continuing magic'. (*al-Qamar*: 1, 2).

The Night Journey and the Ascent to Heaven mentioned earlier were likewise miracles given to Muḥammad (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿ شَهِدَنَّ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَنِي بِعَبْدِهِ لَنْ لَا يَرَى الْمَسْجِدُ الْأَقْصَى ﴾

Glorified is He [Allāh] who took His servant [Muhammad ﷺ] for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah] to the Far Distant Mosque [in Jerusalem]. (*al-Isrā'*: 1).

Miracles of Allāh's Messengers are numerous, and most especially those of our Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), whom Allāh supported with many signs, the like of which has never been given to any of the past Prophets. In fact, we have mentioned here only few examples of the numerous signs and pieces of evidence given to our Prophet (ﷺ).

### Al-Karāmah:

*Karāmah* is a supernatural phenomenon, not associated with a claim to prophet hood, and neither is it considered a premise leading eventually to that. *Karāmah* happens at the hands of a manifestly righteous servant of Allāh, who must be of sound belief and pious acts.

Being an extraordinary development, void of any claim to prophet hood, as defined above, the word '*karāmah*' is applicable to neither conventional events, nor miraculous acts of the Prophets ﷺ. The supernatural development that usually precedes prophet hood, known in Arabic as '*Irhās*' is equally excluded, just as the magic and jugglery of sorcerers and soothsayers are not embodied in the definition.

Different *karāmahs* have been given to many virtuous men or women (*Awliyā'*), including those of the past nations. For instance, Allāh (ﷻ) said of Maryam (Mary) (عليها السلام),

﴿كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا فَانْتَهَى إِذْ يَقُولُ أَنِّي لِلَّهِ هَذَا فَالَّتِي هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِ﴾

Each time Zakariyā [Zachariah] entered upon her in the prayer chamber (*mīhrāb*), he found with her provision. He said, 'O Maryam, from where have you got this'? She said, 'It is from Allāh'. (Āl-'Imrān: 37).

Also parallel to this was the story of the People of the Cave, as related in the Noble Qur'ān.

We shall now make mention of some of the righteous persons among this nation of Muḥammad (ﷺ), who have been honoured with one form of *karāmah* or the other.

- **Usaid bin Ḥuḍair** (رضي الله عنه) was once reading *surat al-Kahf*<sup>(1)</sup> when, as a result of his recitation, some angels descended from heaven in the form of a canopy containing lamp-like images.

- **‘Imrān bin Ḥuṣain**, whom the angels used to salute.

- **Both Salmān and Abū Dardā'** (رضي الله عنهما) were once eating from a plate, when the plate or the food therein glorified Allāh.

- **Khubaib bin ‘Adiyy** (رضي الله عنه) was held captive by the Makkān idolaters, as a hostage or prisoner of war, but was found eating grapes at the time there were now grapes at all in the whole city of Makkah.

- **Al-‘Alā’ al-Hadrami** (رضي الله عنه) and his troops crossed an open sea while riding on the backs of their horses; however, the saddles of those horses were not wet.

- **Abū Muslim al-Khawlāni** (رضي الله عنه) was taken captive by Al-Aswad al-‘Anasi, an impostor who claimed he was a Prophet. He asked al-Khawlāni if he would testify to his alleged prophet hood, but the latter dodged answering the question by simply saying, "I can't hear [you]". He also asked whether al-Khawlāni would bear witness that Muḥammad (ﷺ) was Allāh's Messenger, and he responded this time in the affirmative. So al-‘Anasi, the impostor, ordered that his captive (i.e. al-Khawlāni) be thrown into a fire. Surprisingly, al-Khawlāni was later found therein performing prayer; the flaming fire had turned into coolness and source of safety for him. There are more stories of this nature in books of history and biography.

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I- i.e. chapter 18 of the Noble Qur'ān. (Translator)

### **The difference between *mu'jizah* (miracle) and *karāmah*:**

The difference between the two lies in the miracle's link with prophet hood, while *karāmah*, on the other hand, must be void of it. The holder of a *karāmah* deserves it because of his following the Prophet sent to him, and for being upright in accordance with his law. Hence, miracle (*mu'jizah*) belongs to the Prophets, while *karāmah* is for other righteous servants of Allāh. The two, however, are supernatural phenomena.

In the opinion of some leading Muslim scholars, any *karāmah* given to a righteous man or woman must be seen as part of the miracles Allāh has conferred on his/her Prophet; as they could only merit such on account of their compliance with the teachings of their respective Prophets. In other words, any *karāmah* credited to a virtuous person (*waliyy*) must be considered a branch of the miracles conferred on that Messenger, based on whose law he/she has been worshipping Allāh.

It is thus clear that designating a name (i.e. *mu'jizah*) for the supernatural acts of the Prophets, and another (i.e. *karāmah*) for those of other righteous servants of Allāh (*Awliyā'*) is a mere terminological or idiomatic expression, which occurs in neither the Qur'ān nor the *Sunnah*. It is a discretionary deduction by Muslim scholars, based on some textually established facts.

### **The Islamic ruling concerning the belief in miracle (*mu'jizah*) and *karāmah*:**

Believing in the miracles and *karāmah*, given to the Prophets and other righteous servants of Allāh (*Awliyā'*) respectively,

constitutes one of the fundamentals of Faith. This is an established fact, backed up with textual evidence from both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*; hence, every Muslim is duty-bound to hold this belief and accept it as true. Any contrary stance in this respect amounts to rejection of all available proofs. It also means acting against factual evidence, and seriously deviating from what has been the opinion of erudite Muslim scholars concerning this issue. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

### 3.11 *Al-Waliyy* and *al-Wilayah* (Righteousness and being righteous) from an Islamic viewpoint

#### Definition:

*Wilayah*, which originally means love and closeness in the Arabic language is considered the opposite of '*'adāwah'* (enmity), whose origins are hatred and discord.

In technical sense, the word '*wilayah*' stands for "Closeness to Allāh through one's obedience to Him". While '*al-Waliyy*' (the righteous), as an Islamic term, is somebody who combines two important qualities: Faith and piety or dutifulness. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿لَا يَأْكُلُ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُ لَا خُوفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَخْرُقُونَ ﴾ ﴿الْأَنْبِيَاءَ﴾  
وَكَافُرًا يَسْتَعْوِدُونَ ﴾

Behold! Certainly, for the *Awliyā*<sup>(1)</sup> (friends or allies) of Allah there will be no fear, nor will they grieve. [They are] those who believe and keep their duty [to Allāh]. (Yūmūs: 62, 63).

In as much as the allies or friends of Allāh are the pious believers, it follows, logically, that the level of one's closeness or friendship with Allāh is determined based on the degree of his or her faith and piety. Hence, the more committed one is in his faith and his fear for Allāh, the more exceptional becomes his closeness to Him. Therefore, people are not equal in terms of their closeness to Allāh, just as they are at variance regarding their level of commitment, with respect to Faith and piety.

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1- *Awliyā* is the plural form of *waliyy* mentioned above. (Translator)

Generally, Allāh's Prophets are the most superior of all His allies or friends; even though they, themselves, belong to different ranks in the following sequence:

The Messengers (*Rusul*) among them are superior to those who were only Prophets<sup>(1)</sup>, while the '*Ulu al-'azm* (Messengers described by Allāh as men of firm resolution), i.e. Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsa, 'Isa and Muḥammad (صلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) are also superior to all other Messengers. Furthermore, Muḥammad (ﷺ) -as discussed earlier- stands out as the best of all the five '*Ulu al-'azm* Messengers, followed by Ibrāhīm (ﷺ). The question of who is superior to whom among the rest (i.e. Nūḥ, Mūsa and 'Isa) remains unresolved.

### **Categories of the *Awliyā'***

Allāh's allies or friends are divisible into two classes, namely 'the Foremost and Nearest to Allāh' and 'the Moderate Companions of the Right Hand'.

Allāh (ﷻ) has spoken of both groups in many places in His Book. He says,

﴿إِذَا رَفَعْتِ الْوَرْقَةَ ۝ ۚ لَيْسَ لِرَفْعِنَّا كَارِبَةً ۝ ۗ حَافِظَةً رَاقِفَةً ۝ ۚ إِذَا رَحَّبْتِ الْأَرْضَ رَجَّابَةً ۝ ۗ وَرَسَّبَتِ الْجِبَالَ بَشَّا ۝ ۚ فَكَانَتْ هَيَّاهُ مُهَبَّاً ۝ ۗ وَرَكَّبْتِ أَزْوَاجَنَا تَلَّانَةً ۝ ۗ فَأَنْجَبْتِ الْعَيْنَةَ مَا أَنْجَبَتِ الْعَيْنَةَ ۝ ۗ وَأَنْجَبْتِ النَّعْنَةَ مَا أَنْجَبَتِ النَّعْنَةَ ۝ ۗ وَالشَّيْعُونَ أَنْجَبُونَ ۝ ۗ أَنْزَلْتِ الْمَغْرِبَوْنَ ۝ ۗ فِي جَهَنَّمَ الْغَيْرِ ۝﴾

**When the Event Inevitable occurs. There can be no denial of its occurrence. It will bring down [some] and raise up [others]. When**

I- See p. 232 for details on the difference between the two terms (Messenger and prophet). (Translator)

the earth will be shaken to its depths. And the mountains will be crumbled, breaking down. Becoming dust dispersing. And you will be [sorted out into] three classes. So the Companions of the Right -how [fortunate] will be the Companions of the Right. And the Companions of the Left- how [unfortunate] will be the Companions of the Left. And the Foremost, the Foremost. Those are the ones brought near [to Allāh]. In the Gardens of Bliss. (*al-Wāqi'ah*: 1-12).

Thus, Allāh mentioned here three groups: one of them, the Companions of the Left, will be in Hell-fire, while the other two, i.e. the Companions of the Right and the Foremost, the ones brought near to Allāh shall end up in Paradise. Allāh mentions again the two fortunate groups in the close of this chapter (*al-Wāqi'ah*) as He says,

﴿فَلَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْرِجِينَ ﴾٨٩﴿ فَرَوْجٌ وَرَقَبَانٌ وَجَنَّةٌ بَعِيرٌ ﴾٩٠﴿ وَلَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ أَخْيَرِ الْيَتَامَىٰ ﴾٩١﴿ هَلَكَ لَهُ لَدُنْ أَخْصَبُ الْيَتَامَىٰ﴾.

And if he [i.e. the deceased] was of those brought near [to Allāh]. Then [for him is] rest and bounty and a garden of bliss. And if he was of the Companions of the Right. Then [the angels will say], 'peace for you'; [you are] from the Companions of the Right. (*al-Wāqi'ah*: 88-91).

The Prophet (ﷺ) further described the deeds of both parties in a famous *qudsi hadīth*<sup>(1)</sup> where the narrator, Abū Hurairah (رض), quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

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I- See the glossary for its definition.

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى قَالَ: مَنْ عَادَنِي لِي وَلِيٌ فَقْدَ آذَنَهُ بِالْحَرْبِ، وَمَا تَقْرَبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ  
إِلَيْيَّ مَا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَا يَرِزَّ عَبْدِي بِتَقْرَبِهِ إِلَيَّ بِالْمُوَافَلِ حَقِّ أَحِبَّهُ فَإِذَا أَحِبَّهُ كَتَبَ لَهُ  
الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ، وَيَصْرُهُ الَّذِي يَصْرُ بِهِ، وَيَدُهُ الَّتِي يَطْعَشُ بِهَا، وَرَجْلُهُ الَّتِي يَعْشِي بِهَا، وَإِنْ  
سَأَلْتَنِي لِأَعْطِيهِهِ وَلَكِنْ أَسْتَعِذُنِي لِأَعْيَنَهُ).

Allāh (ﷻ) said, 'Whoever shows enmity towards a friend or ally of Mine- I shall be at war with him. The best thing, which My servant may use to get closer to Me is the [religious] obligation that I have enjoined on him. And My servant shall continue to draw near to Me with supererogatory acts until I love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. If he were to request anything from Me, I would surely give him, and were he to seek refuge in Me, I would certainly grant him that [i.e. protect him]'. (*Bukhārī*: 6502).

The righteous, the Companions of the Right, are those who take the religious obligations as means of approach to Allāh (ﷻ). They do what Allāh has enjoined on them and abstain from what He has forbidden them to do. However, they bother neither to perform recommended (non-obligatory) acts nor to renounce unnecessary permissible actions.

As for the Foremost, those who are brought near to Allāh, they worship Allāh with supererogatory acts, in addition to the obligatory ones. Thus, they perform both the mandatory and the recommended deeds, and desist not only from the prohibited ones, but from even the blameworthy as well. Having drawn themselves close to Allāh by worshipping Him with all they could afford of their beloved things,

Allāh (ﷻ), in return for that, loved them deeply and prevented them from committing sins. He also answered their prayer, and this has all been expressed in the above quoted *hadīth*, "And My servant shall continue to draw near to Me with supererogatory acts until I love him"...

**The righteous servants of Allāh or His allies (the *Awliyā'*) neither choose for themselves any special dress nor stick to a peculiar outward appearance.**

Based on what has been authoritatively affirmed by conversant scholars among the *Ahl al-Sunnah* (The Orthodox Sunni Muslims), the true righteous men or women do not single themselves out with either a particular clothing or a peculiar outward appearance. A leading Muslim scholar who has written on this topic puts it in the following way:

Allāh's allies or friends have no external distinctive mark of whatever is declared permissible in Islam. They do not wear a particular dress and avoid another, if wearing both is permissible. Neither do they distinguish themselves by having their hair shaved, cut short or braided, in as much as all are permissible. An adage has it that 'Many a *siddiq* (veracious person) found in suits<sup>(1)</sup>, and many a *zindiq* (atheist or heretic) found in cloaks<sup>(2)</sup>'. Rather, Allāh's allies may come from any category of the followers of Muhammad (ﷺ), with the

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1- Or any other outer garment having no religious significance.

2- i.e. any kind of dress signifying religious importance.

exception of anyone known for heresy or immorality. A righteous servant of Allāh and His ally (*walīyy*) may, therefore, be found among the scholars or expert reciters of the Noble Qur'ān. He may also come from among those who fight in the cause of Allāh, as he may even belong to the trading, agricultural or industrial class.

**Any excessive belief held with respect to Allāh's allies or friends (*Awliyā'*) is null and void.**

The righteous servants of Allāh are all fallible. They do not know the unseen, nor have the power to dispose of anything concerning either the creation or the sustenance. Furthermore, they never invite people to exalt them or give them part of their wealth or certain gifts. Anybody found perpetrating one or more of what we have mentioned above is an impostor, a liar who is rather an ally of the Devil, not of Allāh (ﷺ). Allāh knows best.

## Chapter Four: Believing in the Last Day

4.1 Portents of the Day of Resurrection and their types.

4.2 The bliss and punishment of the grave.

4.2.1 Believing in the bliss and punishment of the grave and the proofs establishing this.

4.2.2 The two (i.e. bliss and punishment) of the grave are applicable to both the soul and the body.

4.2.3 Believing in the two angels, (Munkar and Nakir).

4.3 Believing in the Resurrection.

4.3.1 The real meaning of 'resurrection'.

4.3.2 Proofs establishing the Resurrection from the Glorious Qur'an, the *Sunnah* and reason.

4.3.3 The final gathering.

4.3.4 Description of the heavenly cistern (*Al-Hawd*) and the proofs concerning it.

4.3.5 The heavenly scales (*Al-Mizān*): Features and proofs.

4.3.6 Intercession (*Al-Shafā 'ah*): Definition, types and proofs.

4.3.7 The heavenly bridge (*Al-Sirāt*): Features and proofs.

4.3.8 Description of Paradise and Hell-fire, as well as how to believe in both, and the proofs regarding that.

#### 4.1 Portents of the Day of Resurrection (*Ashrāt al-Sā 'ah*) and their types.

##### Definition:

*Ashrāt* is the plural form of '*sharaṭ*', meaning sign or portent. In the opinion of some linguists, the word may also indicate the outset of an event. However, the author of *Lisān al-'Arab*, a famous Arabic lexicon, added that both derivations are closely related; for the portent of an object or event is likewise its beginning.

The word "*sā 'ah*" in Arabic denotes a period of time, but is widely used particularly in reference to the Resurrection. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَعِنْدَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ ﴾

**With Him is the knowledge of the Hour [i.e. of the Resurrection].**  
(al-Zukhruf: 85).

*Sā 'ah* is one of the most famous names for the Resurrection, both in religious texts and in the ordinary speech of men. The reason for such a designation has links with the nature of the event itself (the Day of Resurrection) which will be sudden and take people by surprise at a given period of time.

Portents of the Hour of Resurrection are signs and indicative events bound to take place before the coming of the Hour itself. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿فَهُلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا الْكَاعِدَةُ أَنْ تَأْتِيهِمْ بِعْنَةً فَقَدْ جَاءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا﴾

Then do they await [anything] except that the Hour should come upon them suddenly? But already there have come [some of] its indications. (Muhammad: 18).

### Types of the portents of the Hour

These portents can be divided into three categories as follows:

1- **Remote or distant signs.** That is those portents which had come to pass and subsequently become part of history. The mission of our Prophet (ﷺ) is considered one of these portents, pursuant to what Anas bin Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) narrated, quoting the Prophet (ﷺ) himself as saying,

(بعثت أنا وال الساعة كهاتين).

**The Last Hour and me being sent (with the divine message) were like these two** (He described this by joining both his forefinger and middle one). (*Bukhârî*: 6504; *Muslim*: 2951).

The splitting of the moon also belongs to this class. Allâh (ﷻ) has said concerning this,

﴿أَقْرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَكَانَ الْقَمَرُ﴾

**The Hour [of judgement and resurrection] has come near and the moon split.** (*al-Qamar*: 1).

Also embodied here is the event of a fire that was to come out from *Hijâz*<sup>(1)</sup> and shed light on the necks of camels in far away *Buṣrâ*<sup>(2)</sup>. Abû Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Allâh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

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1- In Western Arabia. (Translator)

2- A village near Damascus. (Translator)

(لا تثوم الساعة حتى تخرج نار من أرض الحجاز تضيء أعنق الإبل بمصرى).

**The Hour will not come to pass until a fire comes out of the land of *Hijāz*, which shall throw light on the necks of camels in *Buṣrā*.**

(*Bukhārī*: 7118; *Muslim*: 2902).

And just exactly as the Prophet (ﷺ) had declared, the said fire came out in the beginning of *Jumāda al-Ākhirah*, 654 A.H. The fire, which had broken out in the eastern part of Madinah, led to flood-like glows of fire, and created much panic for the people. As mentioned in the above quoted *hadīth*, the light coming from this fire was seen by the people in far away *Syria*<sup>(1)</sup>, as the inhabitants of *Buṣrā* village over there saw in it the necks of their camels.

**2- Intermediate signs.** That is those portents which have occurred in the past and did not stop, but are, rather, constantly on the increase. There are many portents of this kind, which include seeing a slave-girl who will give birth to her mistress<sup>(2)</sup>, and the barefooted, unclothed shepherds competing with one another in building high-rise edifices. The earlier mentioned *hadīth* of Jibrīl reads -in part- as follows:

(... قال: فأخبرني عن الساعة؟ قال: ما الممزول عنها ياعلم من السائل. قال: فأخبرني عن أماراتها، قال: أن تلد الأمة ربها، وأن ترى الحفاة العراة العالة رعاء الشاء يطاردون في البيان).

1- i.e. the old (historic) *Syria* (الشام), which comprised the present-day states of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. (Translator)

2- The indication here is that any offspring resulting from intercourse between a man and his slave-girl or woman is, more or less, regarded a master for the mother, who –being a slave– is counted among her master's property. As it is well known, a man's property eventually gets to his children.

He (Jibril) said, 'Tell me about the Hour<sup>(1)</sup>', and the Prophet's response was, 'Who is being asked this question does not know more than the questioner himself'. Then he said, 'Tell me then about its signs'. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'That a slave-girl will give birth to her mistress, and that you will see barefooted, unclothed, destitute shepherds vying with one another in the construction of magnificent houses'. (*Muslim*: 8).

Also inclusive here is the emergence of thirty impostors, who shall all claim to be Prophets. According to Abū Hurairah (رض), the Prophet (ﷺ) has said,

﴿لَا تَقْرُمُ الْسَّاعَةَ حَتَّىٰ يَعْثُ دَجَالُونَ كَذَابُونَ فَرِيقًا مِّنْ ثَلَاثَةِ كُلُّهُمْ بَرُّ عَمٌ أَنَّهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ﴾.  
The Hour [of Resurrection] will never come to pass until nearly thirty liars emerge, alleging that they are Messengers sent by Allāh. (*Bukhāri*: 3609).

Another narration by Thawbān (رض) has it that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

﴿وَإِنَّهُ سَيَكُونُ فِي أُمَّقِي لِلَّادُونَ كَذَابُونَ كَلُّهُمْ بَرُّ عَمٌ أَنَّهُ نَبِيٌّ، وَأَنَا خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّنَ لَا نَبِيٌّ بَعْدِي﴾.  
And there shall be of my nation [i.e. followers] thirty impostors, who will all claim to be Prophets. I am the final Prophet; no other Prophet shall come after me. (*Sunan Abū Dawūd*: 4252; *Sunan Tirmidhi*: 2219<sup>(2)</sup>).

Another portent of this category is the mountain of gold, which shall be uncovered by the River Euphrates, and what will follow that

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1- i.e. the last day of the world.

2- This is a "*ḥasan-ṣahīḥ*" *ḥadīth*, according to Tirmidhi.

of people's fighting over the treasure. Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(لَا تفوت الساعة حق يحسر الفرات عن جبل من ذهب يقتل الناس عليه، فيقتل من كل  
مائة سبعة وتسعين ويقول كل رجل منهم لعلى أكون أنا الذي أنجو).

**The Hour [of Resurrection] will not be established until the River Euphrates uncovers a mountain of gold beneath it. A [fierce] combat over the treasure shall erupt between the people, leaving ninety-nine out of every one hundred [combatants] dead, while every one of them would have said, 'Perhaps I shall be the one who will survive'. (*Muslim*; 2894<sup>(1)</sup>). This portent has not yet happened.**

**3- Major signs.** These are portents that will immediately precede the coming of the Hour itself. These signs are ten in number, none of which has taken place yet. According to a report by Muslim in his *hadīth* compilation, Hudhaifah bin Asid (رضي الله عنه) narrated as follows,

(أخلع النبي ﷺ علينا ونحن نتذكرة، فقال: ما عذاكرون؟ قالوا: نذكر الساعة. قال: إنما لن تقوم حق تروا قبلها عشر آيات: فذكر الدخان والدجال، والدابة، وطلوع الشمس من مغربها، ونزول عيسى ابن مريم ﷺ، وباجوج وماجوج، وثلاثة حسروف: خسف بالشرق وخسف بالمغرب وخسف بجزيرة العرب، وأخر ذلك نار خرج من اليمن فطرد الناس إلى محشرهم).

The Prophet (ﷺ) came to us all of a sudden as we were busy in a discussion. He said, 'Concerning what are you discussing'? We replied, 'We are discussing the Hour [of Resurrection]'. Then he said,

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I- A similar narration occurs in both *Sahīh Bukhārī*; 7119 and *Musnād Ahmad*, vol. ii, p. 261.

'It will not come to pass until you see ten signs preceding it'. He then mentioned the Smoke, the Antichrist (*Dajjāl*), the Beast, rising of the sun from the west, 'Isā ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary)'s descent [from heaven], the Gog and Magog and cave-in of the earth in three different locations; one in the east, one in the west and one in the Arabian peninsula. The last of these portents is a fire that will come forth from Yemen, and shall drive people to their place of assembly. (*Muslim*: 2901).

In some other *hadīths*, the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned *Al-Mahdi*, demolition of the *Ka'bah* (The Sacred house in Makkah), and the Noble Qur'ān being lifted from the earth. We shall later quote the *hadīths* relating to all of these.

Majority of Muslim scholars, especially those with high academic standing, believe that the ten major portents of the Hour are the three we have just mentioned, as well as those mentioned in the above quoted *hadīth* of Hudhaifah bin Asid. The only exception is the cave-ins, which were also mentioned in the same *hadīth*. The cave-ins, no doubt, form part of the portents, but will happen before the major ten. Hence, they are more of a preamble for them. This opinion enjoys the support of what we have in another version of this same *hadīth* by Hudhaifah bin Asid, also reported by Muslim. Here the cave-ins were mentioned ahead of any other portents. The *hadīth* reads thus,

(إِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا تَكُونُ حَقًّا تَكُونُ عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ خَسْفٌ بِالْمَشْرِقِ وَخَسْفٌ بِالْمَغَربِ وَخَسْفٌ فِي جُزِيرَةِ الْعَرَبِ وَالْدُّخَانُ وَالْدُجَالُ...).

The Hour will not come to pass until there come ten signs: a cave-in in the east, another one in the west, and a third one in the Arabian

peninsula, the Smoke, the Antichrist... Then he mentioned the remaining portents. (*Muslim*: 2901).

Qurtubi, a well-known Muslim scholar, remarked saying, "Based on what we have in this version of the *hadīth*, the first of these signs would be the three cave-ins. Some of the signs have occurred during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), as pointed out by Ibn Wahb"...

In the coming pages, we shall give details concerning the ten major portents, as well as the proofs thereof.

### a) The coming of *Al-Mahdi*

*Al-Mahdi* is a man from among the family of the Prophet (ﷺ); a descendant of Hasan bin 'Ali [the Prophet (ﷺ)'s grandson], who will come and fill the earth with justice and equity, as it would have been filled before him with injustice and oppression. Both Mahdi's name and that of his father will be exactly as that of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his father (i.e. Muhammad bin 'Abdullah). Abū Dawud and Tirmidhi narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd (رض) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(لَا تذهب الدنيا حتى يملأ العرب رجل من أهل بيتي يواعظي أصحه أسمى وأسم ابيه اسم أبيه  
يملأ الأرض عدلاً وقسطاً كما ملئت جوراً وظلماً).

The world shall not come to an end until a man from my family rules over the Arabs. His name will be the same as mine, while his father's name will also be as my father's name. He will fill the land [i.e. the world] with justice and equity, as it was filled with tyranny and injustice. (*Sunan Abū Dāwūd* vol. iv, p.305, *hadīth* no 4282; *Sunan Tirmidhi* vol. iv, p. 505, *hadīth* no. 2230<sup>(1)</sup>).

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I- The *hadīth* as quoted above was taken from *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*. Tirmidhi, on his part, classified it as a "*hasan-sahīh*" *hadīth*.

b) The emergence of the Antichrist (*al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl*):

*Al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl* is a human being who will appear at the End of Time, with a wide range of temptations for many of Allāh's creation. Allāh will cause some supernatural acts to happen through him, and he shall claim to be the Lord. His false claim will never entice a true believer, even though he will have unrestricted access to every city in the world save Makkah and Madinah. He shall have with him a fire and a paradise, although his purported fire is, in reality, paradise, while his so-called paradise is, in fact, a fire. Many authentic *hadīths* of the Prophet (ﷺ) have spoken of the coming of the Antichrist, including the one transmitted by Muslim in his *sahīh* compilation, on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Ās (رضي الله عنهما), who quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

بخرج الدجال في أعقى فيمكث أربعين لا أدرى أربعين يوماً أو أربعين شهراً أو أربعين عاماً  
فيبعث الله عيسى ابن مريم كأنه عروة بن مسعود فيطبله فيهلكه ...).

The Antichrist (*Dajjāl*) will appear in my nation and shall stay for forty, I cannot say whether he meant forty days, forty months or forty years. Then Allāh will send 'Īsa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary), resembling 'Urwah bin Mas'ūd<sup>(1)</sup>, who will chase him (the Antichrist) and kill him ... (*Muslim*: 2940).

In another *hadīth* transmitted by both Bukhāri and Muslim, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) said, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) once stood among the people and praised Allāh in a manner He deserves. He then spoke of the Antichrist saying,

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[1] One of the Prophet's Companions.

(إِنَّ أَنذِرَ كُمْهُ وَمَا مِنْ نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا قَدْ أَنذَرَهُ قَوْمٌ لَقَدْ أَنذَرْتَهُ نَوْحًا قَوْمَهُ وَلَكِنَّ سَاقُولَ لَكُمْ فِيهِ  
قَوْلًا لَمْ يَقُلْهُ نَبِيٌّ لِقَوْمِهِ تَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ أَغْوَرُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِأَغْوَرٍ).

I forewarn you about him. There was never a Prophet before, except that he had warned his people of him [i.e. the Antichrist]. Nūh had warned his people of him. However, I shall tell you concerning him something no Prophet has ever told his people; you should know that he is one-eyed, whereas Allāh is, certainly, not. (*Bukhāri*: 3057, *Muslim*: 169<sup>(1)</sup>).

### c) ‘Īsa bin Maryam (Jesus)'s descent from heaven

He shall descend to the earth as a fair ruler, and will break the cross, kill pigs and slay the Antichrist. There are proofs from both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* on this. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَعَلَمٌ لِلسَّاعَةِ﴾.

**And he [Jesus] will be a known sign for [the coming of] the Hour.**  
(al-Zukhruf: 61).

Many of the Qur'ān expositors have seen in the above verse an indication to Jesus's descent from heaven. According to a report in the *Musnad Ahmad*, subscribers to this view include Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), who said while explaining the verse, "It implies the coming of ‘Īsa ibn Maryam (Jesus ﷺ) before the Day of Resurrection<sup>(2)</sup>".

1- The text of the *hadīth* as quoted above is from the latter.

2- *Musnad Ahmad* vol. i, p. 318.

There are also many authentic *hadīths* on this, including the one narrated by Abū Hurairah (رض), who quoted the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) as saying,

(وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْ شَكِنْتُ أَنْ يَنْزَلَ لِيَكُمْ إِنْ مُرِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ عَدْلًا فِي كسرِ الصَّلَبِ وَيُقْتَلُ الْخَلَزِيرُ، وَيُبْطَعُ الْجَزِيرَةُ وَيُفْيَضُ الْمَالُ حَقًّا لَا يَقْبِلُهُ أَحَدٌ، حَقٌّ تَكُونُ الْمَسْجَدَةُ الْوَاحِدَةُ خَيْرًا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا).

By Him in whose Hand is my soul, [‘Īsa - Jesus] the son of Mary will shortly descend among you as a just ruler, and shall destroy the cross, kill pigs and abolish the *jizyah*<sup>(1)</sup>. Then, there will be abundance of wealth, that nobody will like to accept it, and a single *sajdah* [i.e. a prostration or prayer] would be more rewarding than the whole world and whatever is therein. (*Bukhāri*: 2222; *Muslim*: 155<sup>(2)</sup>).

#### d) The emergence of Gog and Magog

Gog and Magog are part of Allāh's creation, so numerous in number that no one could dare wage war against them. They are believed to be of the progeny of Yāfiث, a son of prophet Nūh (ﷺ). The Glorious Qur'ān, as well as the *Sunnah* contain references to the emergence of Gog and Magog. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ هَقُّ إِذَا فَيَحْكَتْ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَاجُوجُ وَهُمْ قَنْ كُلُّ حَدْبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ ۝ وَاقْرَبَ الْوَعْدُ الْحَقُّ فَلَذَا هُوَ شَكِيقَةٌ أَنْصَرَ اللَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۝ ﴾

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1- See the glossary for its definition.

2- The text of the *hadīth* has been taken from the latter.

Until when Gog and Magog are let loose [from their wall], and they swoop down from every mound. And [when] the true promise [i.e. the Resurrection] has approached; then suddenly the eyes of those who disbelieved will be staring [in horror]. (*al-Anbiyā'*: 96, 97).

Zainab bint Jahsh (رضي الله عنها), one of the Prophet's wives, also narrated that, one day, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) dropped in on her while in fear saying,

(لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، وَبِإِلَهِ الْعَرَبِ مِنْ شَرِّ قَدْ أَقْرَبَ فَعَنْ رَدْمٍ يَأْجُورُ وَمَا جَرَى مِثْلُ هَذِهِ  
»وَحَلَقَ بِأَصْبَحِهِ الْإِهْمَامِ وَالَّتِي تَلَيَّهَا...«).

*La ilāha illa Allāh* (None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh). Woe to the Arabs for an imminent danger; A hole has been made in the wall of Gog and Magog, like this. He demonstrated this by forming a circle with his thumb and index fingers... (*Bukhāri*: 3346; *Muslim*: 2880).

e) Demolition of the *Ka'bah* and looting of its ornaments by a man called *Dhū-Suwaiqatain* (i.e. the thin-legged man) from *Abyssinia* (now Ethiopia).

The proofs of this from the *Sunnah* include what Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(نَحْرُبُ الْكَعْبَةَ ذُو السُّوْرِقَتَيْنِ مِنَ الْجِبَشَةِ).

*Dhū-Suwaiqatain* from *Abyssinia* will demolish the *Ka'bah*. (*Bukhāri*: 1591; *Muslim*: 2909).

Imam Ahmad also reported through a sound chain of transmission that 'Abdullah bin 'Amr (رضي الله عنهما) narrated that he heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) saying,

(هُرَبَ الْكَعْبَةَ ذُرَ السَّرِيقَتِينَ مِنَ الْجَبَشَةِ، وَيَسِّلُهَا حَلِيَّهَا وَيَجْرِدُهَا مِنْ كَسْوَتِهِ، وَلَكَانَ  
أَنْظَرَ إِلَيْهِ أَصْبَلَعَ أَفِيدَعَ يَضْرِبُ عَلَيْهَا بِمَسْحَاتِهِ وَرَمْوَلِهِ).

*Dhū-Suwaiqatain* from Abyssinia will destroy the *Ka'bah*, loot its decoration and strip it of its covering. As if I were looking at him [now]; a bald-headed man, with bent wrist or ankle, striking at it [i.e. the *Ka'bah*] with his shovel and pickaxe. (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. ii, p. 220).

#### f) The Smoke

This refers to the eruption of a heavy smoke from the sky, which shall cover all people. The proof of this in the Glorious Qur'an goes as follow:

﴿فَلَرْقَبْتُ يَوْمَ تَأْلِفُ السَّمَاءَ بِدُخَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴾ ١٠ ﴿يَعْشَى النَّاسُ هَذَا عَذَابُ أَلِيمٌ﴾  
Then watch for the Day when the sky will bring a visible smoke. Covering the people; this is a painful torment. (*al-Dukhān*: 10, 11).

As for the proof from the *Sunnah*, the *hadīth* of Hudhaifah bin Asid (رضي الله عنه) mentioned earlier has it that,

(إِنَّمَا لَنْ تَقُومُ حَقِّيْ قَبْلَهَا عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ فَذَكْرُ الدُّخَانِ وَالدَّجَالِ وَالدَّابَّةِ).  
Indeed it [i.e. the Hour] will not come to pass until you see ten signs preceding it. The Prophet (ﷺ) then mentioned the Smoke, *Dajjāl* (the Antichrist) and the Beast. (*Muslim*: 2901).

#### g) The Qur'an shall be lifted (retrieved) from the earth back to heaven

This will be to the extent that no single verse, whether it had been written down or committed to memory, shall be left out. A

reference to this comes in a *hadīth* narrated by Ḥudhaifah [bin al-Yamān], wherein he quoted Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying,

يَدْرُسُ الْإِسْلَامُ كَمَا يَدْرُسُ وَشِيَ الْغَرْبَ حَتَّى لا يَدْرُسَ مَا صِيَامٌ وَلَا صَلَاةٌ وَلَا نِسْكٌ،  
وَلِيُسْرَى عَلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِي لَيْلَةٍ فَلَا يَقْعُدُ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْهُ آيَةٌ...).

Islam will be effaced just as the embroideries of any cloth get blotted out, until no one will know of neither fasting, nor *salāh* (prayer), nor the *hajj* (i.e. pilgrimage: Hajj or 'Umrah). The Book of Allāh will be retrieved in just one night, and no single verse of it shall remain on the earth. (*Sunan ibn Mājah* vol. ii, p. 1344, *hadīth* no. 4049; *al-Mustadrak* vol. iv p. 473<sup>(1)</sup>).

#### b) Rising of the sun from the west.

This also has been mentioned in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ مَا كُنْتُ تَرْكُ لَا يَنْتَعِنُ هَذَا إِيمَانُكُمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مَا مَنَّتُ مِنْ قَبْلٍ أَوْ كَسَبْتُ فِي إِيمَانِكُمْ خَرَا﴾

The day that some of the signs of your Lord will come no soul will benefit from its faith as long as it had not believed before or had earned through its faith some good. (al-An'ām: 158).

Many scholars of the Qur'ānic exegesis see in the clause "some of the signs of your Lord" a reference to this phenomenon, that is rising of the sun from the west. Imam al-Tabari said after relating the opinions of other scholars on the verse, "The most correct view in this regard is

1- Going by the standard of the Muslim's collection of the *hadīths*, this *hadīth* has been classified by al-Ḥākim as authentic. al-Dhahabi is also in support of this view.

what has been overwhelmingly reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said,

(ذلك حين تطلع الشمس من مغربها).

**That is when the sun rises from the west<sup>(1)</sup>.**

Similarly, Both Bukhāri and Muslim reported on the authority of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(لا تقوم الساعة حتى تطلع الشمس من مغربها فإذا طلعت فرأها الناس آمنوا أجمعون فذلك  
حين لا ينفع نفسمَا إيمانها لم تكن آمنت من قبل أو كسبت في إيمانها خيراً).

**The Hour shall not come to pass until the sun rises from the west. When this happens and the people see it, they will all believe [in Allāh and in His religion]. That is when no soul will benefit from its faith, if it had neither believed nor earned some good through its faith before.** (*Bukhāri*: 4636; *Muslim*: 157).

### i) The appearance of the Beast (*Dābbah*)

The Beast is a prodigious hairy and legged creature, whose length is believed to be sixty cubits<sup>(2)</sup>. It is also assumed that it is a different creature bearing resemblance to many animals. Its coming before the Day of Resurrection has been confirmed in both the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

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1- Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarīr, *al-Tafsīr* vol. viii, p. 97.

2- Cubit is an ancient measure of length based on the length of the forearm.  
(Translator)

﴿ وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَفِّهُمْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا يَكْفِهُنَا لَا يُؤْفَقُونَ ﴾

And when the word befalls them, We will bring forth for them a beast from the earth speaking to them, for the people were, of Our signs, not certain [in Faith]. (*al-Naml*: 82).

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said, according to a narration by Abū Hurairah (رض),  
 (ثلاث إذا خرجن لا ينفع نفساً إيماناً لم تكن آمنت من قبل أو كبت في إيماناً خروجاً طلوع الشمس من مغربها والدجال ودابة الأرض)

When [the following] three things appear, no good will it do to a person to believe then, if he had disbelieved before or had not earned some good through his faith:

- 1- Rising of the sun from the west.
- 2- [The coming of] the Antichrist (*Dajjāl*).
- 3- [The appearance of] the Beast (*Dābbah*) of the earth.

(*Muslim*: 158).

Another *hadīth* reported by Imam Ahmād on the authority of Abū Umāmah (رض) reads as follows,

(خرج الدابة فتسم الناس على خراطيمهم ثم يضرون فيكم حتى يشتري الرجل البعير فيقول من اشتريته فيقول: من أحد المخطفين).

The Beast shall come out and mark people<sup>(1)</sup> on their noses. Then, those who have been marked will become many among you, to the extent that a man will buy a camel, and when he is asked, 'From whom did you buy it?' he replies, 'From one of those marked people'. (*Musnād Ahmād* vol. v, p. 268<sup>(2)</sup>).

1- i.e. the infidels. Cf. *Faīd al-Qadīr* vol. iii, p. 236. (Translator)

2- Al- Haithami and some other scholars of the *hadīth* classified the chain of transmission for this *hadīth* as *sahīh* (sound).

j) **The out-break of a raging fire**, which will come forth from Aden [in Yemen] and drive the people to their place of assembly [on the Day of Judgement]. This portent will mark the end of all the major portents of the Day of Resurrection. The reference to the portent has come in the *hadīth* of Hudhaifah bin Asīd (رضي الله عنه) quoted earlier, where the Prophet (ﷺ) was reported to have said,

(وآخر ذلك نار تخرج من اليمن تطرد الناس إلى محشرهم).

**And the last of all this will be a fire which shall come forth from Yemen and drive people to their place of assembly** [i.e. on the Day of Judgement]. (*Muslim*: 2901).

In another version of the same *hadīth*, the text reads as follows,

(ونار تخرج من قعده عدن ترحل الناس).

**And a fire which shall come forth from the depth of Aden and drive people away.**

The aforementioned are the most important portents of the Hour, after which the Hour itself will be established by Allāh's permission. It has been reported, as well, that those portents shall follow one another in an uninterrupted sequence, like strung beads. Thus, no sooner that a portent surfaces than it will be quickly followed by another. According to al-Ṭabarānī, Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(خروج الآيات بعضها على إثر بعض، يتابعن كما تتابع الحز في النظام).

**The appearance of the portents shall be in continuous succession; they shall follow one another in an unceasing sequence, like beads strung with one another.** (*al-Mu'jam al-Awsat* vol. v, p. 148, *hadīth* no. 4283).

## 4.2 The bliss and punishment of the grave<sup>(1)</sup>

### 4.2.1 Believing in the bliss and punishment of the grave and the proofs establishing this

To believe in the bliss kept for those who are obedient to Allāh, and in the punishment reserved for whoever deserves it of the disobedient and undutiful persons, while in their graves, constitutes a basic element of Faith, duly attested to by both the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. On the bliss of the grave Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿ يَعِيشُ اللَّهُ الْمُرْسَلُوكُ . كَمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الْأَكْبَرِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الْأُولَى وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ﴾

Allāh keeps firm those who believe, with the firm word, in the worldly life and in the hereafter. (Ibrāhim: 27).

This verse indicates that Allāh (ﷻ) keeps the faithful firm in their answers to the questions they will be asked in their graves. Moreover, it is also an indication to what follows that of ease and comfort. Similarly, Bukhāri reported on the authority of al-Barā' bin 'Āzib (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(إِنَّمَا أَقْعَدَ الْمُرْسَلَ مِنْ فِرْدَوْسٍ أَيْمَانَهُ شَهِيدٌ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ مُحَمَّداً رَسُولُهُ فَذَلِكَ فَوْلَهُ) ﴿ يَعِيشُ اللَّهُ الْمُرْسَلُوكُ . كَمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الْأَكْبَرِ ﴾

When a believer has been seated in his grave, [The two angels] come to him. Then, he will testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allāh, and that Muhammad is His Messenger. This is what Allāh referred to in His saying, 'Allāh keeps firm those who believe, with the firm word'... (Bukhāri: 1369).

As for the punishment of the grave, Allāh (ﷻ) said,

I- This theme will be discussed under three headings.

﴿وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ فِرْعَوْنُ مُوْءِعُ الْعَذَابِ ﴾ ﴿النَّارُ يَعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا عَذَابًا وَعَذَابًا وَيَوْمَ نَقْرُمُ أَكَانَهُ أَذْخَلُوا إِلَيْهَا فِرْعَوْنُ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ﴾

And the worst of punishment enveloped the people of *Fir'aun* (Pharaoh). The Fire; they are exposed to it morning and afternoon. And the day the Hour comes to pass [it will be said], 'Make the people of Pharaoh enter the severest punishment'. (Ghāfir: 45,46).

Al-Qurtubi, a notable scholar of the Qur'ānic exegesis, commented on this, saying, "The majority of Muslim scholars are of the opinion that the scene [of the Pharaoh's people being exposed to Fire before the coming of the Hour] will be in the interval between a person's demise and his resurrection on the Day of Judgement (*Barzakh*). It is therefore, a proof confirming the existence of the 'Punishment of the Grave'." Another erudite scholar, al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr also said, "This verse is an important proof for *Ahl al-Sunnah* who infer from it the existence of the *Barzakh*'s punishment in the grave<sup>(1)</sup>".

Another Qur'ānic verse proofing the reality of the Punishment of the Grave goes as follows,

﴿سَنَعذِّبُهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يَرْدُوْنَكُمْ إِلَى عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

We shall punish them twice, and thereafter they will be brought back to a horrible punishment. (al-Tawbah: 101).

Many scholars among the pious predecessors have figured out from this verse a testimony on the reality of the punishment of the grave.

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I- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, vol. vii p. 136.

According to one of them, Mujahid (مujahid رضي الله عنه), "We shall punish them twice, that is, with starvation and the Punishment of the Grave. Then, they will be brought back to a horrible punishment, i.e. on the Day of Resurrection". Another scholar, Qatādah also expressed his view on the import of this verse by saying, "Punishment in the world and in the grave. Then, they will be brought back to a severe punishment". In addition, *Bukhāri*, the great scholar of the *hadīth* also used the verses mentioned above as proofs of the Punishment of the Grave in his classification of *hadīths* pertaining to this subject<sup>(1)</sup>.

The proofs from the *Sunnah* concerning the bliss and punishment in the grave are many. For instance, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said,

(إِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ إِذَا مَاتَ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ مَقْعِدٌ بِالْفَدَاءِ وَالْعُشَيِّ إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ فَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ فَمِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ فَيُقَالُ هَذَا مَقْعِدُكَ حَتَّى يَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ).

"When one of you [i.e. people in general] dies, he will be shown his position in the morning and in the afternoon. If he is of the people of Paradise, then his position among them shall be displayed for him. And if he is of the inhabitants of the Fire, then he will be shown his position among them. It will be said to him, 'This is your [ultimate] position; until Allāh resurrects you on the Day of Judgement'." (*Bukhāri*: 1379; *Muslim*: 2866).

Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) also reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

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I- Cf. *Bukhāri's* collection (*al-Sahīh*), the chapter of the *hadīths* relating to the Punishment of the Grave. (See *Fath al-Bārī* vol. iii, p. 231).

(لولا أن لا يدافوا للدعوت الله أن يسمعكم من عذاب القبر).

**Had it not been for [the fear I have] that you may cease to bury the dead among you, I would have asked Allāh to let you hear the Punishment of the Grave.** (*Muslim*: 2868).

The proofs relating to this subject in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* are many. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

#### 4.2.2 The two (i.e. bliss and punishment of the grave) are applicable to both the soul and the body

The bliss and punishment of the grave affect not only the corpse but the soul of the dead person as well. In other words, the enjoyment or the suffering of the soul is not unconnected with that of the body or the remains of the deceased, as both shall share the two together. However, it may happen in some cases that the soul alone enjoys the bliss or bear the torment. This has been duly proved in many religious texts, and has also been agreed upon by *Ahl al-Sunnah*, in contrast to an opposing view that only the soul would be, in all cases, the object of the bliss and punishment in the grave.

The proofs on this include a narration by Anas bin Malik (رضي الله عنه) quoting the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) as saying,

(إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا وُضِعَ فِي قَبْرٍ وَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُ أَصْحَابَهُ وَإِنَّهُ لِيسمَعُ فَرْعَنَعَمْ أَنَّهُ مُلْكَانَ فِي قَبْرِهِنَانَ فَيَقُولُ: مَا كُنْتَ تَقُولُ فِي هَذَا الرَّجُلِ (خَسِدَ حَسِدَ) فَلَمَّا مَلَأَنَمْ فَيَقُولُ: اشْهِدْ أَنَّهُ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَيَقَالُ لَهُ انْظُرْ إِلَى مَقْعِدِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ قَدْ أَبْدَلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ مَقْعِدًا مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ فَلَمْ يَهْمِهِ وَأَمَّا الْمُنَافِقُ وَالْكَافِرُ فَيَقَالُ لَهُ مَا كُنْتَ تَقُولُ فِي هَذَا الرَّجُلِ؟ فَيَقُولُ: لَا أَدْرِي كُنْتُ أَقُولُ مَا يَقُولُ النَّاسُ فَيَقَالُ: لَا درِيتُ وَلَا تَلِيتُ، وَيَضْرِبُ بِعَطَارِقِهِ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ ضَرِبةً فَيَصِحُّ صِحَّةً يَسْمَعُهَا مِنْ يَلِيهِ غَيْرُ الْكَلِينِ).

**When a servant [of Allāh]<sup>(1)</sup> has been lowered into his grave, as his companions leave him behind, he, in fact, hears their footsteps. Two angels will come to him and get him seated, then ask him the following question: 'What did you use to say of this man (that is,**

1- The servitude to Allāh here is generic, meaning every human being, as they are all completely under His control, the believers and non believers alike. (Translator)

Muhammad ﷺ)? As for a believer, his response will be: 'I testify that he is a servant of Allāh and His Messenger'. Then, it will be said to him, 'Take a look at your position in the Fire; Allāh has provided for you instead, another position in Paradise', and he shall see both. As for a hypocrite or an infidel, both of whom will be asked the same question, 'What did you use to say of this man?', their answer will be: 'I do not know; I used to say what I heard people saying'. Then each of them will be told, 'Neither did you know, nor [take guidance through the] recitation [of the Glorious Qur'ān]'. After this, he will be hit with iron hammers, [the effect of that on him will be to the extent that] he will produce such a cry as everything near to him will hear, except human beings and *jinn*. (*Bukhārī*: 1338).

The lengthy *hadīth* narrated by al-Barā' bin 'Āzib, as reported by Ahmad, Abū Dawūd, al-Ḥākim and others, also contain an important addition. In this *hadīth*, The Prophet ﷺ was quoted to have said, after mentioning the discharge of the soul, and the subsequent ascent of a believer's soul to heaven,

(فَعَادَ رُوحُهُ فِي جَسْدِهِ لِيَأْتِيهِ مَلْكَانٌ فِي جَلْسَانَهُ فَيَقُولُانَّ لَهُ مِنْ رَبِّكَ)

The soul of the dead person shall be returned back to his body. Then, two angels will come to him, make him sit and ask him, Who is your Lord?... (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. iv, p. 287; *Sunan Abū Dawūd* vol. v, p. 75 *hadīth* no: 4753, *al-Mustadrak* vol. i, pp. 37-38<sup>(1)</sup>).

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I- Al-Ḥākim and some other scholars classified this *hadīth* as authentic (*sahīh*).

The two aforementioned *hadīths*, therefore, show that the bliss and punishment in the grave are applicable to both the soul and the body. In the first *hadīth*, the clause, '**When a servant [of Allāh] has been lowered into his grave**' is a clear validation of this, for the word 'a servant' [meaning a person] definitely refers to both the body and the soul. On the other hand, the Prophet (ﷺ)'s declaration, in the second *hadīth*, that the soul would be returned back to the body during the interrogation, further buttresses this viewpoint. Furthermore, the words and terms used in both *hadīths* clearly reflect bodily specifications and qualities. Those expressions include, '**He hears their footsteps**'; '**Two angels will come to him and get him seated**'; '**He will be hit with iron hammers**'; and '**He will produce such a cry...**' All of these point to the fact that what befalls one of either bliss or punishment in his grave has to do with the soul and the body together.

However, in some other Islamic texts the implication is that the delight and agony of the grave may be confined, in some cases, to the soul alone. According to 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(لَا أُصِيب إخوانكم - يعني يوم أحد - جعل الله أرواحهم في أجواض طير خضر تردد أفار  
الجنة وتأكل من ثمارها وتاري أي قناديل من ذهب في ظل العرش).

**When your brothers were killed [as martyrs in the battle of Uhud], Allāh made their souls to be inside green birds. The birds fly to the rivers of Paradise, eat of its fruits and retire to golden**

**Lamps in the shadow of the Throne.** (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. i, p. 266; *al-Mustadrak* vol. ii, pp. 88, 297<sup>(1)</sup>).

Thus, we arrive at a conclusion that both the soul and the body are subject to bliss or punishment while in the grave, and this may be restricted to the sole alone in some cases. Regarding this, a leading scholar of the Prophetic tradition said, "*Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* (The Orthodox Sunni Muslims) have unanimously agreed that both the body and the soul will be subject to the Bliss and Punishment of the Grave. The soul is thus tormented or blessed, either in isolation or together with the body as a single entity. The bliss and punishment are inflicted on both in this case, as they may also be restricted in some other cases to the soul alone".

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I- A sound *hadīth*, in the opinion of both al-Hākim and al-Dhahabi.

#### 4.2.3 Believing in the two angels, namely Munkar and Nakir:

In the course of our discussion on the angels and their functions, we mentioned both Munkar and Nakīr as the two angels vested with the power to interrogate the dead in their graves. Here, we shall focus on believing in their existence in detail, and their role in trials of the dead; in as much as all this, by and large, constitutes part of our on-going discussion concerning the belief in Bliss and Punishment of the Grave.

Description of the two angels and their interrogation of the deceased after the funerals have been reported in many authentic *hadīths*. Tirmidhi and Ibn Ḥibbān both reported on the authority of Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

((إذا قبر الميت - أو قال أحدكم - أتاه ملكان أسودان أزرقان يقال لأحد هم المكرو والآخر المكر، فيقولان ما كنت تقول في هذا الرجل، فيقول: ما كان يقول هو عبد الله ورسوله،أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً عبده ورسوله، فيقولان: قد كنا نعلم أنك تقول هذا ثم بنسح له في قبره سبعون ذراعاً في سبعين... وإن كان مخالفًا قال: سمعت الناس يقولون قلت مثلك لا أدرى؛ فيقولان: قد كنا نعلم أنك تقول ذلك، فيقال للأرض الشمي عليه فقلتم عليه فتحتفف أضلاعه فلا يزال فيها معدباً حتى يبعثه الله من مرضجهه ذلك). -

When a deceased -or perhaps he said, 'one of you'- has been buried, two black angels with blue eyes will come to him; one of them is *al-Munkar* and the other is called *al-Nakīr*. They will both ask the deceased, 'What did you use to say about this man'? He will then recount what he used to say [while he was alive] that, He [Muhammad (ﷺ)] is a servant of Allāh and His Messenger; 'I testify that no one has the right to be worshipped save Allāh, and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger'. The two angels

will then say, 'We had known before that you would say what you have just said'. Thereafter, his grave will be expanded to the extent of 70x70 (4900 square) cubits. However, if he (the deceased) was a hypocrite, he would say, 'I heard people saying [something about the man] and I also said the same but I do not know'. The two angels will say, 'We knew already this was going to be your response'. After this, the earth will be told to press him and it will do until his ribs are clasped together; he will not be relieved of the torment until Allāh resurrects him from where he is. (*Sunan Tirmidhi* vol. iii, p. 383, *hadīth* no. 1071, *al-Ḥasan fi Taqrib Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* vol. vii, p. 386 *hadīth* no. 3117<sup>(1)</sup>).

The *hadīth* of Anas bin Malik mentioned in the previous topic is also a proof of the interrogation in the grave by the two angels.

It is, therefore, obligatory to believe in all that has been proved in the *hadīths* concerning the names of the two angels, their description, as well as their interrogation of the deceased in their graves and the mode of that. Furthermore, we should have no doubt about what shall be the responses of either the believers or the hypocrites to their questions. Neither should we be skeptical about the comfort or distress that must eventually befall the dead, as elaborately explained in those *hadīths*.

Muslim scholars have different opinions concerning whether the interrogation in the grave will be for the followers of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) alone, or for all other nations of the past Messengers

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I- Tirmidhi classified this *hadīth* as 'hasan-gharīb'.

(عَلَيْهِمُ الْكَلَمُ) as well. However, based on the import of the available proofs, the view supporting that the interrogation will be a general phenomenon, affecting all and sundry, seems more correct. It is also the opinion of most of the erudite Muslim scholars. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

#### **4.3 Believing in the Resurrection:**

Believing in resurrection of the dead is one of the greatest fundamentals of Faith in Islam. Resurrection itself, as an issue, consists of many aspects traceable to proofs from Islamic texts. We shall now treat those aspects under different headings with a view to expose the essence of 'resurrection', the importance of believing in it, and what a believer should believe in, concerning its conditions and events.

##### **4.3.1 The real meaning of 'the Resurrection' (*Al-Ba'th*)**

The word *al-ba'th* in Arabic is used in two ways as follows:

First: It is used to mean 'sending' or 'dispatching' someone or something. We can note the instance of this usage in a saying of Allāh (ﷻ) that,

﴿ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ شُوَّشَ﴾

**Then We sent after them Mūsā.** (al-A'rāf: 103).

Second: It is also used as a synonym of other words, namely, '*ithārah*' and '*tahrik*' (awakening and prompting). Hence, it is commonly said, "*Ba'th tu al-ba'tha fa n ba'atha*", meaning, "I incited or awoke the camel, then it got incited". Very close to this

meaning is when we say, '*Ba'thu al-mawtā*', that is, resurrection of the dead and bringing them out of their graves. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ ثُمَّ بَعْثَتْنَاكُم مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ ﴾

**Then We revived you after your death...** (al-Baqarah: 56). i.e. We restored life back to you.

Resurrection (*al-Ba'th*) as an Islamic term would therefore imply raising-up of the dead and causing them to come out of their graves by Allāh (ﷻ). This resurrection means exactly that Allāh (ﷻ) will gather decomposed bodies of the dead and restore them back to their original forms and shapes with His Might. After that, He will reinstate their lives and drive them to their place of assembly for the final judgement. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَسَيَقَ خَلْقَهُ فَإِنَّ مَنْ يُحْكِمُ الْعِظَمَ وَهُوَ رَوِيهٌ ﴿٦﴾ قُلْ يَحْكِيمُهَا أَلَّا يَرِى  
أَنَّهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةً وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ حَلِيقٌ طَلِيفٌ ﴾

And he puts forth for Us a parable, forgetting his [own] creation. He says, 'Who will give life to bones while they are disintegrated'? Say [O Muḥammad] 'He will give them life who produced them the first time; and He is, of every creation, All-Knowing. (Yā-Sin: 78, 79).

According to Hudhaifah (رض), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(إن رجلاً حضره الموت لا يُيس من الحياة أوصى أهله: إذا مت فاجمعوا لي حطبًا كثيرون ثم  
اوروا نارًا حرق إذا أكلت لحمي وخلصت إلى عظمي فخذلوها فاطحنتها فذرولي في النهر  
في يوم حار أو راح فجمعه الله فقال: لم فعلت؟ قال: خشيتك، فغفر له).

Death approached a man, who, having lost any hope to survive, instructed his family thus, 'Whenever I die, you should gather for me much firewood, and build a fire [to burn my remains]. When

the fire has eaten up my flesh and reached my bones, you should take the bones, grind them and then scatter the resulting powder in the sea on a windy day<sup>(1)</sup>. [They did exactly as he had instructed them], but Allāh gathered his particles and then asked him, 'Why have you done so?' The man replied, 'Out of my fear of You'. Allāh, therefore, forgave him. (*Bukhāri*: 3479).

It is thus clear from the above quoted verse and *hadīth* that Allāh will reproduce the same bodies and gather their disintegrated remains, so that they are restored back to their original forms, after which He will give life back to them. Glorified is He (Allāh) who is never incapable of doing anything, and able is He to do all things.

The *Sunnah* has further shed light on how exactly the Resurrection will take place, adding that Allāh will send down water (rain) which shall bring forth the dead like grasses growing on the surface of the ground. According to both *Bukhāri* and *Muslim*, Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(ما بين الفخرين أربعون) قال: أربعون يوماً، قال: أينت؟ قال: أربعون شهراً؟ قال: أينت، قال: أربعون سنة؟ قال: أينت، قال: (لن ينزل الله من السماء ماء فيقيرون كما ينبت البقل ليس من الإنسان شيء، لا يبلى إلا عظماً واحداً، وهو عجب الذنب ومنه يركب الخلق يوم القيمة).

**Between the first blowing of the trumpet and the second one there shall be an interval of forty.** The narrator, Abu Hurairah was asked, 'Is it forty days, or forty months, or forty years?'; but responded by

I- Cf. *Fath al-Bārī* vol. vi, p. 522. (Translator)

saying 'I refused [to specify that]<sup>(1)</sup>. After that, Allāh will send down water from the sky, while the dead will rise in a manner similar to the growing of herbs. Every part of the human body will decay, except the coccyx, from which the whole body will be reconstructed on the Day of Resurrection. (*Bukhāri*: 4935; *Muslim*: 2955).

Thus, the *hadīth* has explained how the Resurrection is going to be. It has also stated that the dead shall remain in their graves for forty, between the first and the second blowing of the trumpet; the first being the killing blowing, while the second will be for resurrection. Although the narrator of this *hadīth* did not specify whether the interval would be forty days, months or years, it has, however, been reported in some versions of the same *hadīth* that it will be forty years. When Allāh (ﷻ) decides to resurrect His creation, He will send from the sky water likened in some narrations to men's sperm. With that water, the dead bodies will be reverted into living human beings, who shall rise up from their graves like growing grasses, after every part of their bodies, save the coccyx, had disintegrated. It is worth reiterating here that the Prophets and Messengers of Allāh are exempted from this; their bodies shall never decay.

From the foregoing, we hope the reader has gained some insights regarding the nature, time and mode of resurrection. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

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I- Cf. *Fath al-Bārī* vol. viii, p. 414. (Translator)

### 4.3.2 Proofs establishing the Resurrection from the Glorious Qur'ān, the *Sunnah*, and reasoning

Glorious Qur'ān as well as the *Sunnah* have proved, in many instances, that Allāh (ﷻ) will resurrect the dead. Qur'ānic proofs in this respect include the following:

﴿ثُمَّ بَعْثَتْنَاكُم مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشَكُّرُونَ﴾

**Then We revived you after your death that perhaps you would be grateful.** (al-Baqarah: 56).

﴿مَا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِلَّا كَيْفَيْنَ وَجَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِحِلْمٍ بَصِيرٌ﴾

Your creation [that is, Allāh's creation of all human beings] and your resurrection are just as [easy as the creation and resurrection] of a single soul. Indeed, Allāh is All-Hearing and All-Seeing. (Luqmān: 28).

﴿رَأَمُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ يَعْثَوْأُلُّ بَلْ وَرَبِّ الْجَنَّاتِ ثُمَّ لَمَّا هُنَّ يَعْلَمُونَ وَذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِسِيرٍ﴾

The unbelievers claimed that they would never be resurrected. Say, 'Yes, by my Lord, you will surely be resurrected, then you will surely be informed of what you did; and that, for Allāh, is easy'. (al-Taghābun: 7).

Concerning proofs from the *Sunnah*, Abu Hurairah (رض) reported to have heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying,

(لَا تَفْضُلُوا بَيْنَ أَبْيَاءِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهُ يُفْخَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَيُفْعَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ قَالَ: ثُمَّ يُفْخَخُ فِيهِ مَرَةً أُخْرَى فَإِنَّكُمْ أُولَئِنَّ مَنْ بُعْثَتْ لَوْ فِي أَوَّلِ مَنْ بُعْثَتْ فَهَذَا مُوسَى أَخْذَ بِالْعَرْشِ...).

**Do not rate any of Allāh's Prophets as superior to another, for when the trumpet is blown, everyone on the earth and in the heavens will become unconscious, except those whom Allāh will**

exempt. Then it will be blown once again and I will be the first person to be resurrected, or among those who will be the first to be resurrected, only to see Mūsā hanging on the Throne... (*Bukhāri*: 3414; *Muslim*: 2373).

In another narration, reported also by both *Bukhāri* and *Muslim*, but on the authority of Abu Sa'īd al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه), the text reads as follows:

فَأَكْرُونَ أَوْلَى مِنْ تَشْقِيقِ عَهْدِ الْأَرْضِ...  
...فَأَكْرُونَ أَوْلَى مِنْ تَشْقِيقِ عَهْدِ الْأَرْضِ...)

**...And I will be the first person for whom the earth shall split apart.** (*Bukhāri*: 2412; *Muslim*: 2278).

The body of the two *hadīths* thereby verified that on the Day of Resurrection, Allāh would raise up the dead from their graves, and cause them to proceed to the place of the final assembly (*Al-Mahshar*). The *hadīths* on the other hand point out the distinctive quality of the Prophet (ﷺ) as the first person who will be resurrected on the Day of Judgement.

Sound logical reasoning is, likewise, another proof confirming the existence of Resurrection. A common-sense approach to the issue will reveal that restoration of an already created being after it had ceased to exist, otherwise known as resurrection, is much easier than the initial creation of that being. For this reason, Allāh (ﷻ) has cited in the Glorious Qur'ān the creation of man in the beginning as a clear proof of inevitability of the coming of the Resurrection. Allāh further stressed that He that is capable of beginning the creation, is surely, and even with greater reason, able to repeat it. Thus, He relates for us

in His Book the argument of that individual who questions the rationality of Resurrection, saying,

﴿مَن يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهُوَ رَبِّكُمْ﴾

**'Who will give life to bones while they are disintegrated'?**.. (Yā-Sin : 78).

Then, Allāh (ﷻ) refuted this argument saying,

﴿فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لِرَبِّهِ أَثَاماً إِذَا مَرَّوا﴾

**Say [O Muhammad] 'He will give them life who produced them the first time'.** (Yā-Sin : 79).

Allāh says also,

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي بَدَأَ فِي الْخَلْقِ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَاتُ عَلَيْهِ﴾

**And it is He who begins creation; then He repeats it, and that is [even] easier for Him.** (al-Rūm: 27).

This stands, therefore, as both textual and logical proof from the Glorious Book of Allāh against whoever denies or opposes the Resurrection, and what an irrefutable proof is it!

#### 4.3.3 The final gathering:

There are textual proofs stating that all creatures will be gathered barefooted, naked and not circumcised in the Place of the Final Gathering (*al-Mahshar*) after their resurrection. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَحَسْنَتْهُمْ فَلَمْ يُغَارِبْنَاهُمْ أَحَدٌ﴾

**And We will gather them [all], leaving out none of them.** (al-Kahf: 47).

﴿يَوْمَ يُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ عَنِ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ وَصَرَّحُوا بِهِ لِلَّهِ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

**On the Day the earth will be changed to a different earth, and so will be the heavens too, and they [i.e. all creatures] will appear before Allāh, the One, the Prevailing.** (Ibrāhīm: 48).

‘Āishah (رضي الله عنها) narrated that she heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying,

(يَخْتَرُ النَّاسُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَفَّةً عَرَاءً غَرَلًا) قَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ النِّسَاءُ وَالرِّجَالُ جَمِيعاً، يَنظُرُ  
بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ؟ قَالَ ﷺ: (يَا عَائِشَةَ الْأَمْرُ أَشَدُ مِنْ أَنْ يَنظُرَ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ).

People will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection barefoot, naked and uncircumcised. I said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, men and women all together; looking at one another!' The Prophet (ﷺ) said, **O ‘Āishah, the matter will be too serious for them to look at one another.** (*Bukhāri*: 6527; *Muslim*: 2859).

This gathering will be general embracing all creatures of Allāh. Some other Islamic texts make mention of another gathering, which shall take place either in Paradise or in Hell. In this case, the faithful will be led to Paradise in the form of an honourable delegation, whose members will ride on camels. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿كُوْمَ يَخْتَرُ الْمُتَقِيَّينَ إِلَى الْأَخْرَجِينَ وَفَدَ﴾

**The Day We will gather the pious unto [Allāh] the Most Merciful as a delegation.** (*Maryam*: 85).

Imam Ṭabari narrated that ‘Ali (ؑ) said regarding the meaning of this verse, "By Allāh! [members of] this delegation will neither be summoned walking on their feet, nor be driven [in a humiliating manner]. Rather, they will be presented with she-camels, the like of which no created being has ever seen. They [i.e. their riding camels] will have on them golden saddles, and their bridles will be made of aquamarine. They will mount these camels until they knock on the doors of Paradise".<sup>(1)</sup>

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I- *Al-Ṭabari, Tafsīr* vol. viii, p. 380.

As for the disbelievers, they will be led to Hell-fire prone on their faces; blind, dumb and deaf. Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿الَّذِينَ يَخْرُجُونَ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ إِلَى جَهَنَّمَ أُولَئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّا كَانُوا بِأَصْلَلُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ﴾

The ones who are gathered [prone] on their faces to Hell, those are the worst in position and, as to [the straight] path, most astray. (al-Furqān: 34).

﴿وَنَخْرُجُ هُنَّا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عَمِيًّا وَبَحْرًا وَضَحْجًا﴾

And We will gather them on the Day of Resurrection [prone] on their faces – blind, dumb and deaf. (al-Isrā': 97).

#### 4.3.4 Description of the Prophet's heavenly cistern (*Hawd*) and the proofs concerning it

The *Hawd* is a huge water basin Allāh has given the Prophet (ﷺ). It is located at the Place of the Final Assembly (*Mahshar*) where he and his followers shall come (to drink from). This cistern has been described in many texts as (containing water) whiter than milk, colder than ice, sweeter than honey and more fragrant than musk. Yet, it is extremely wide; both its length and breadth measuring equally, while each of its angles covers the distance of one month's walk. Its water is supplied directly from Paradise, through a golden spout and another one made of silver. The number of vessels thereof is equal to that of stars in the sky.

The existence of the Prophet's cistern is confirmed in many authentic *hadīths*, rated by some competent scholars as *mutawātirs*<sup>(1)</sup>. The *hadīths* were narrated by more than thirty companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), including Anas bin Malik (رضي الله عنه) who quoted the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) as saying,

(إِنْ قَدِرَ حُوْضِي كَمَا بَيْنَ أَيْلَهُ إِلَى صَنَاعَةِ مِنَ الْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ فِيهِ مِنَ الْأَبَارِقِ كَعَدَدِ نُجُومِ  
السَّمَاءِ).

**The dimensions of my cistern are just like the distance between *Aylah* and *San'ā'* in Yemen, while its cups are as many as the number of stars in the sky.** (*Bukhārī*: 6580; *Muslīm*: 2303).

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1- A *mutawātir hadīth* is that which has been narrated at all stages of transmission by so many persons, that their number and trustworthiness eliminate doubts about its authenticity. (Translator)

'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Ās also narrated saying, The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said,

(حَوْضِي مسيرة شهر وزواياه سواء، ماءه أطيب من اللبن، وريحه أطيب من المسك، وكثيراته كحوم النساء من شرب منها فلا يطأها أحد).

The extent of my cistern is equivalent to the distance of a month journey [on foot]. Its angles are equal, while the water thereof is whiter than milk and more fragrant than musk. As for its vessels, they are like stars in the sky. Whoever drinks from it shall never feel thirsty again. (*Bukhāri*: 6579; *Muslim*: 2292).

The cistern, as said earlier, is located at the Place of the Final Assembly, and its water gush forth from River *Kawthar*, which is another river in Paradise that Allāh has also given the Prophet (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَر﴾

We have, indeed, granted you [O Muhammad] the *Kawthar*. (*al-Kawthar*: 1).

Some scholars are of the opinion that the heavenly balance (*Al-Mizān*) comes before the cistern (*Hawd*), while other scholars maintain that the cistern comes first. The latter view is, however, the correct one. Imam Qurtubi, a notable scholar of the Qur'ānic exegesis, said, "This [i.e. that the *Hawd*, chronologically, will precede the *Mizān*] seems to be meaningful, for people shall come out of their graves thirsty".

#### 4.3.5 'Al-Mizān' (The heavenly balance/scales): Features and proofs:

*Al-Mizān*, a real balance with two pans and a pivot, is another constituent part of the mandatory belief concerning events of the Day of Reckoning. It will be used for weighing people's deeds, and shall tilt with any good or bad deed equal to even the weight of an atom. Proofs from the Qur'aan and the *Sunnah* on the existence of the heavenly scales include the following. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَنَصْعَدُ الْعَرْجَنَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمٍ أَلْيَكُحُوكَ فَلَا تَظْلَمُنَا نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ﴾

And We shall place the balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, so no soul will be treated unjustly at all... (al-Anbiyā': 47).

﴿ فَإِنَّمَا مَنْ نَقْلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ۝ ۚ فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ ۝ ۖ وَإِنَّمَا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ۝ ۚ فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ أَوْيَةٌ ۝ ۷﴾

Then as for one whose balances [of good deeds] will be [found] heavy. He will be in a pleasant life [in Paradise]. But as for one whose balances will be [found] light. He will have his home in a pit [that is, Hellfire]. (al-Qāri'ah: 6-9).

According to both Bukhāri and Muslim, Abū Hurairah (رض) reported a saying of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) reading as follow:

(كَلْمَاتَانِ حَبِيبَانَ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ خَفِيفَانَ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ ثَقِيلَانَ فِي الْمِيزَانِ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ).

[There are] two expressions that are dear to [Allāh], the Most Merciful; very light [i.e. easy] for the tongue to pronounce, and yet heavy in weight in the scales [of human deeds]. They are: '*Subḥāna Allāh wa bi hamdihi, subḥāna Allāh al-'Azīm'* (Glory be

to Allāh, and praise be to Him. Glory be to Allāh the Sublime). (*Bukhārī*: 7563; *Muslim*: 2694).

Another narration by Imam Ahmad, al-Hākim and others, revealed that Ibn Mas'ūd, a Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) once climbed an *arākah*<sup>(1)</sup> tree. Being a thin legged person, the wind started to shake him, and this scene made the people around him scoffed at him. Then, the Messenger (ﷺ) asked them of the cause of their laugh, and they replied, 'O the Prophet of Allāh, it was the thinness of his [Ibn Mas'ūd's] shins that made us laugh'. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, '**By Him (Allāh) in whose Hand is my life, those shins [of Ibn Mas'ūd] are, indeed, heavier in the Balance than the mountain of Uhud!**' (*Musnād Ahmad* vol. i, pp. 420, 421; *al-Mustadrak* vol. iii, p. 317<sup>(2)</sup>).

Based on what we found in some Islamic texts, the heavenly scales will be used to weigh three different things. These are:

#### 1- Deeds.

It has been authoritatively reported that mankind's deeds will be materialized and weighed in the Balance on the Day of Judgment. The above quoted *hadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah, i.e. 'The two expressions that are dear to [Allāh] the Most Merciful...' is an evidence for this.

#### 2- The sheets or scrolls where the deeds are recorded.

The proof of this is a *hadīth* narrated by 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Āṣ (عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ 'أَمْرٍ بْنِ الْأَṣ), quoting Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying,

1- *Arākah* is the tree whose small branches are usually used as sticks for cleaning the teeth, especially in Muslim countries. (Translator)

2- The *hadīth* has been classified as *sahīḥ* by both al-Hākim and al-Dhahabi.

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُخْلُصُ رَجُلًا مِّنْ أُمَّتِي عَلَى رُزُوسِ الْخَلَاقِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَيُشَرِّرُ لَهُ تِسْعَةٌ وَّتِسْعَينَ سَجْلًا كُلُّ سَجْلٍ مِّثْلُ مَدِ الْبَصَرِ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: أَتَنْكِرُ مِنْ هَذَا شَيْئًا؟ أَظْلَمْتَ كُلَّنِي الْحَافِظُونَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: لَا يَا رَبِّي. فَيَقُولُ: أَلَكَ عَذْرٌ أَوْ حَسْبَةٌ؟ فَيَبِهِتُ الرَّجُلُ، فَيَقُولُ: لَا يَا رَبِّي. فَيَقُولُ: بَلِّي إِنَّكَ عَدَنَا حَسْبَةً وَاحِدَةً، لَا ظُلْمٌ عَلَيْكَ الْيَوْمَ فَتَخْرُجُ لَهُ بَطَاطَةٌ فِيهَا: اشْهِدْ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، فَيَقُولُ: احْضُرْ وَزْنَكَ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّي مَا هَذِهِ الْبَطَاطَةُ مَعَ هَذِهِ السَّجَالَاتِ؟ فَقَالَ: إِنَّكَ لَا تُظْلَمُ. قَالَ: فَوْرَضْ السَّجَالَاتِ فِي كَفَةِ الْبَطَاطَةِ فِي كَفَةِ، قَالَ: فَطَاشَتِ السَّجَالَاتِ وَتَقْلَلَتِ الْبَطَاطَةُ وَلَا يَقْلُلُ شَيْءٌ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ).

**On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will single out a man among my followers in the presence of all other creatures and spread ninety-nine scrolls [records of bad deeds] over him; each scroll extending as far as the eyes could see. Then, He will say, 'Do you deny anything of these (recorded deeds)? Did My scribes, who kept watch, wrong you'? The man will reply, 'No, my Lord'. Then, Allah will ask him whether he had done any good deed, or perhaps he has any excuse for the bad ones he had perpetrated. The man will become stunned and say, 'No my Lord'. Allah will say, 'But you have [in you record here] with Us a good deed, and today you will not be wronged'. Then, a document will be brought out containing the testimony that 'None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and Muhammad is both His servant and Messenger'. Allah will then say, 'Come on to witness yourself the weighing [i.e. of your deeds]' The man says, 'O my Lord! Of what significance could this [single] document be with all these scrolls [of my wrong deeds]? Allah will say, 'Surely, you will not be wronged'. The scrolls will be put in one of the scales [of the Balance] and the document in the other. The [99] scrolls will**

become light, and the document, heavy; nothing becomes heavy when compared [in weight] with the name of Allāh the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. ii, p. 213; *Sunan Tirmidhi*, vol. v, p. 24-25, *hadīth* no. 2639; *al-Mustadrak* vol. i, pp. 6, 529<sup>(1)</sup>).

3- The person who performed the deeds himself is also subject to being weighed on the Day of Resurrection. This has been expressed in the following Qur'anic verse, where Allāh says of the infidels,

﴿مَا لَنْ يَعْلَمُ لَهُمْ بِوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَلَا هُمْ بِآنَّا﴾

We shall, therefore, assign no weight to them on the Day of Resurrection. (*al-Kahf*: 105).

Similarly, the *hadīth* of Ibn Mas'ūd (\*), mentioned above, is another proof in this regard. As we have read in that *hadīth*, Ibn Mas'ūd's shins will be heavier on the scale than the mountain of Uhud.

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I- A sound *hadīth*, according to both al-Ḥākim and al-Dhahabi.

#### 4.3.6 Intercession ('Al-Shafā'ah'): Definition, types and proofs.

Literally, the word '*shafā'ah*' indicates 'means and request', while in conventional sense, it implies demanding the good on behalf of another person. On the other hand, *shafā'ah* or intercession with respect to Allāh (ﷻ) is to ask Him to overlook sins and misdeeds of another person.

The intercession with Allāh denotes, in essence, that He, out of His kindness and generosity, will on the Day of Resurrection allow some of His righteous creatures, angels, Messengers, or ordinary believers to intercede with Him for some sinners who had never associated partners with Him. This will be done with the aim of uncovering the honourable status of the intercessors in the sight of Allāh, as well as showing His mercy to those on whose behalf the intercession will be made.

The validity of an intercession of this kind is, however, conditional on the fulfilment of the following:

- Allāh's permission for the intercessor to intercede, as clearly stated in His sayings that,

﴿مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ﴾

**Who is he that can intercede with Him except by His Permission?**  
(Al-Baqarah: 255).

﴿وَلَا تَنْفَعُ النَّفَاعَةُ عَنْهُ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أَوْكَدَ لَهُ﴾

**And no intercession can avail with Him except for one whom He permits.** (Saba': 23).

- b) That Allāh is pleased with the person on whose behalf the intercession is made. The proof of this prerequisite is the saying of Allāh (ﷻ) that,

﴿وَلَا يَسْتَغْفِرُ لِأَلْهَمَ لَرْضَى﴾

**And they cannot intercede except for one with whom He [Allāh] is pleased.** (al-Anbiyā': 28).

Whereas there are Islamic texts proving that Allāh only approves of intercessions made on behalf of the monotheist believers. Muslim reported on the authority of Abū Hurairah (رض) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(لكل نبي دعوة مستجابة فمحمل كل نبي دعوه وإني أخربات دعوتي شفاعة لأمني يوم القيمة فهي تائلة إن شاء الله من مات من أممي لا يشرك بالله شيئاً).

To every Prophet [Allāh has given] a granted supplication. While every other Prophet had shown haste in [reaping the fruit of] his supplication, I have reserved mine for intercession for my followers on the Day of Resurrection. And if Allāh so willed, it would reach every individual of my nation (i.e. my followers) who dies without associating partners with Allāh. (*Muslim*: 199).

Moreover, Allāh (ﷻ) said about the unbelievers,

﴿فَإِنَّمَا يَعْمَلُونَ سُوءٌ لِّأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُنذَّرُونَ﴾

**Therefore, no intercession of the intercessors will be of any use to them.** (*Mudaththir*: 48).

There are many proofs, in the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, establishing the intercession with Allāh on the Day of Resurrection. Having mentioned above some of the Qur'ānic texts in this regard, we shall now quote some of the many proofs from the *Sunnah* relating to

this issue as well. Abu Sa'īd al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(... فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى شَفَعَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَشَفَعَ النَّبِيُّونَ وَشَفَعَ الْمُرْسَلُونَ وَلَمْ يَقُلْ إِلَّا أَرْحَمَ الْإِنْجِيلَنِ فَيَقْبَضُ قَبْضَةً مِنَ النَّارِ فَيُخْرِجُ مِنْهَا قَوْمًا لَمْ يَعْمَلُوا خَيْرًا قَطُّ).

... Allāh , Blessed and Exalted be He, will then say [on the Day of Resurrection], 'The angels, the Prophets and the believers have all interceded. Now it is the turn of [Allāh] the Most Merciful of those who show mercy'. Upon that, He will take a handful of (the inhabitants of) Hellfire and thereby set free from it a group who had never done any good deed. (*Musnad Ahmad* vol. iii, p.94; al-Šan'āni, 'Abdul Razzaq, *al-Musannaf* vol. xi, p.410, *hadīth* no. 20857).

The *hadīths* on the intercession on the Day of Resurrection are numerous. Eminent Muslim scholars have also testified to their being famous and frequent in the *Sīḥah*<sup>(1)</sup> and *Masānīd*<sup>(2)</sup> *hadīth* literatures. Furthermore, it has been reported in the two most authentic collections of *hadīth* that,

(يُخْرِجُ مِنَ النَّارِ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالٌ حَسَدٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ مِنْ إِيمَانٍ).

**Anyone who has Faith in his hearth, even equal to the weight of a mustard seed, shall be taken out from Hellfire.** (*Bukhārī*: 7439; *Muslim*: 184).

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1- i.e. those collections of the *hadīths* consisting, only, of the sound or authentic *hadīths*. (Translator)

2- *Masānīd* is the plural form of *Musnad*, which means, in technical sense, a collection of the *hadīths* arranged according to their narrators, and not according to their contents. A *Musnad* may consist of authentic and weak traditions. (Translator)

### Types of the Intercession:

Any intercession, in view of either its acceptance or otherwise, is divisible into two: accepted and rejected. As for the former, it is such an intercession that fulfils all conditions, while the latter is that which fails to comply with one or more of the stipulated provisos, which we have mentioned earlier in this book.

A total of eight types of intercession are for our Prophet (ﷺ), and they all belong to the category of the accepted intercession. These are:

#### **The Greatest Intercession (*Al-Shafā'ah al- Uzma*)**

1- This refers to the Prophet's (ﷺ) intercession for people on Doomsday; he will beseech Allāh to commence judgement between them after they had waited for long in an helpless mood. This privilege of interceding in that critical situation, referred to elsewhere as the Laudable Position (*Maqām Maḥmūd*), is one of the distinctive characteristics of our Prophet (ﷺ) above all other Messengers of Allāh, may His Blessings be upon all of them.

2- The Prophet's intercession for a group of people whose good and bad deeds will be equal. He will mediate for them so as to be admitted into Paradise.

3- The Prophet's intercession for a group of people, so that they will be exempted from going to Hell, even though they really deserve that.

4- His mediation for the inhabitants of Paradise, with a view to get their positions elevated.

5- He will also intercede for another group to be admitted into Paradise without being called to account for their deeds.

6- He will, similarly, mediate for some others who deserve to be punished, so that their punishment may be toned down. The Prophet's (ﷺ) intercession for his uncle, Abū Tālib belongs to this category.

7- The dwellers of Paradise will also be given permission to enter it only after the Prophet's intercession on their behalf.

8- He will also intercede for some of his followers who had entered Hell on account of their major sins, to be liberated from it.

All of these types of intercession are confirmed in many authentic texts, the details of which are available in books of Islamic Creed and *Sunnah*.

Some of the aforementioned types of mediation are given specifically to the Prophet (ﷺ) alone. Such as the Greatest Intercession, the intercession for his uncle, Abū Tālib, and the one meant for gaining entrance permission for the inhabitants of Paradise. However, carrying out other forms of intercession, such as the one for perpetrators of major sins, involves all other Prophets and righteous men and women. The question of whether or not this or that particular type of intercession is a special quality of the Prophet (ﷺ) remains unresolved among the scholars, in some few cases. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

#### 4.3.7 The heavenly bridge (*Al-Sirāt*): Features and proofs:

From a linguistic viewpoint, the word '*sirāt*' refers to a plain route. *Sirāt*, in the Islamic perspective, is a bridge stretched across the Hellfire, which every one, whether of old or later times, will have to cross on the Day of Resurrection. It will also be the pathway for those who shall proceed from the place of Final Assembly to Paradise.

There are proofs from both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* confirming the existence of this bridge. For instance, Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَلَنْ يُنْكِرُ إِلَّا وَارْدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَسْنًا مَفْعُورًا ﴾ ٧٢ ﴿لَمْ تُنْجِي الَّذِينَ آتَقْوَا وَنَذَرُوا طَلَبِي  
فِيهَا جِئْنَاهُمْ﴾

**And there is none of you except he will come to it (Hell). This is upon your Lord an inevitability decreed. Then We will save those who feared Allāh and leave the wrongdoers therein [humbled] on their knees.** (Maryam: 71,72).

"Coming to it (Hell)" as mentioned above, means, according to the majority of Qur'ānic exegesis scholars, crossing the *sirāt* bridge. This view was also expressed by Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Mas'ūd, Ka'b al-Āhbār and others.

In the same vein, Abu Sa'īd al-Khudri (رض) reported, in a detailed narration of the events of *Ru'yah*<sup>(1)</sup> and the intercession in the hereafter, that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

I- i.e. seeing Allāh (ﷻ). (Translator)

(... ثم يُؤتى بالجسر فيجعل بين ظهري جهنم فلتا يا رسول الله وما الجسر؟ قال: مدحضة مزلاة، عليه خطاطيف وكاللاب وحiska مقاطحة لها شوكة عقيفاء تكون بمجد يقال لها السعدان، المزمن عليها كالطرف وكالبرق، وكالريح وكاجاريد الحيل والركاب فناج مسلم وناج مخدوش ومكدرس في نار جهنم غير آخرهم يسحب سحبها).

Then the bridge will be laid across Hell. We [i.e. the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ)] said, 'O Allāh's Messenger, what is the bridge?'. He replied, "It is a slippery [bridge] on which there are hooks and wide thorny seed, bearing prickles with bent ends. Such a thorny seed, called *al-Sa'dān* is usually found in *Najd* area<sup>(1)</sup>. Some believers will cross the *Sirāt* bridge as quickly as the wink of an eye. Some others as fast as lightning, some as fast as the wind and some as fast horses and camels. Some of them will, therefore, land safely without any harm, some after receiving some scratches, while some will fall down into Hell. The last person will cross [the bridge] being dragged. (*Bukhāri*: 7439, *Muslim*: 183<sup>(2)</sup>).

The '*Sirāt*' bridge is described in many *hadīths* as more delicate than hair and sharper than a sword. It is also said to be so slippery that one can hardly stand firm on it, except he whom Allāh will make to secure there a foothold. This bridge shall be laid in a murky place. However, people will be given light in accordance with the level of their Faith, thereby crossing it in different conditions based on the degree of their Faith as explained earlier in the previous *hadīth*.

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1- The central plain of Arabia is called *Najd*, *Riyāḍ*, the capital of Saudi Arabia, for instance, is located in *Najd*. (Translator)

2- The *hadīth* as quoted above has been taken from the *Bukhāri's* compilation.

#### 4.3.8 Description of Paradise and Hell-fire, as well as how to believe in both, and the proofs regarding that.

Believing in the existence of Paradise and Hell is a religious obligation. Paradise, situated in the Seventh Heaven near the Lote-tree of the Utmost Boundary, is the abode meant for rewarding whoever obeys Allāh. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿ وَلَقَدْ رَأَهُ تَرَلَةً أُخْرَى ﴾ ١٣ ﴿ عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمَكْتَفِ ﴾ ۚ

And surely, he has seen him [Jibrīl] in another descent [on another occasion]. At the Lote-tree of the Utmost Boundary. Near it is the Paradise of Abode. (al-Najm: 13-15).

Paradise comprises one hundred degrees in all, the scope between every degree and another is like the distance between the sky and the earth. Abū Hurairah narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مَاةَ دَرْجَةً أَعْدَهَ اللَّهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، مَا بَيْنَ الدَّرْجَاتِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ).

**There are one-hundred degrees in Paradise, which Allāh has prepared for those who fight in His cause. The distance between every two degrees is equal to the distance between the sky and the earth.** (Bukhāri: 2790).

The highest position in Paradise is called '*Al-Firdaws al-A'la*', on the top of which there is the Throne, and from it the rivers of Paradise shall gush forth. The above quoted *ḥadīth* of Abū Hūrairah (رض) went further to say, "So if you supplicate to Allāh, ask for the *Firdaws*, for it is the best part of Paradise and the highest position thereof. The Throne of [Allāh] the Most Merciful is at its top, and from it the rivers of Paradise gush forth".

(فَإِذَا مَاتَ الْأَنْبَيْتُ فَسْلُوْهُ الْفَرْدُوسَ فَإِنَّهُ أَوْسَطُ الْجَنَّةِ وَأَعْلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَفَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَمِنْهُ  
تَفَجُّرُ الْمَاءُرُ الْجَنَّةِ).

Paradise has eight gates, as mentioned in the *hadīth* reported by Bukhārī on the authority of Sahl bin Sa‘d (رضي الله عنه)، who quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(فِي الْجَنَّةِ ثَمَانَةِ أَبْوَابٍ فِيهَا بَابٌ يُسَمِّي الرَّبِّيَانُ لَا يَدْعُلُهُ (لَا الصَّائِمُونَ)).

There are eight gates leading to Paradise, one of which is called '*Al-Rayyān'*; only those who used to fast will be allowed to enter through this gate. (*Bukhārī*: 3257). The bliss Allāh has prepared for dwellers of Paradise is such that no human being has ever seen or heard of, and neither has it ever occurred to a human mind.

On the other hand, Hellfire is the abode of everlasting punishment for the disbelievers, the polytheists and the hypocrites – whose hypocrisy is in relation to their Faith. Hell will similarly be a transient home for sinners among the faithful, whom Allāh may choose to punish in proportion to the gravity of their guilt, and then admit them into Paradise. Thus, He says,

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرِكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنِ يَشَاءُ ﴾

Indeed, Allāh forgives not associating partners with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. (*al-Nisā’*: 48).

Hell is located in the Seventh Earth, according to a statement ascribed to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), and consists of downward levels with varying degrees. A prominent Muslim scholar of the past, ‘AbdulRahmān bin Aslām said, "The degrees of Paradise are in the

ascending order, while those of Hell are in the descending order. The nethermost of all the levels (of Hell) will be home of the hypocrites", just as Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَقْبِلِينَ فِي الدَّارِكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ الْأَنَارِ﴾.

**Indeed, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth of the Fire.** (*al-Nisā'*: 145).

As for the gates to the Fire, there are seven in all. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿لَهُ سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِكُلِّ بَابٍ مِنْهُمْ جُزَءٌ مَفْسُورٌ﴾.

**It has seven gates; for each of those gates is a portion of them [i.e. sinners] assigned.** (*al-Iijr*: 44).

The known [i.e. ordinary] fire of this world is just a part of some seventy parts which make up the Hellfire. The *hadīth* confirming this, as reported by both *Bukhāri* and *Muslim* on the authority of Abū Hurairah, reads as follows:

(نَارٌ كُمْ جُزُءٌ مِنْ سَبْعِينَ جُزْءاً مِنْ نَارٍ جَهَنَّمْ).

**Your [ordinary] fire is one of the seventy parts of Hellfire.** (*Bukhāri*: 3265; *Muslim*: 871).

There are three factors necessary for believing in both Paradise and Hell, these are:

1- To believe definitely in their existence; in Paradise as an abode for the righteous, and in Hellfire as home for disbelievers and hypocrites. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّا نَحْكِمُ بَيْنَ أَنفُسِهِمْ فَمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ هُمْ بَلَىٰ أَنَّهُمْ جُنُودٌ مُّغَرَّبُونَ  
لَيَدُوْلُوْنَ الْعَذَابَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزاً حَكِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنَدِ خَلِيلٍ  
جَنَّتِ بَحْرٍ مِّنْ تَحْبِيَ الْآخِرَةَ خَلِيلِنَ فِيهَا أَبْدَانٌ﴾.

Surely, those who disbelieve in Our *āyahs* [i.e. revelations or signs]  
We shall burn them in Fire. As often as their skins are roasted  
through We will replace them with other skins that they may taste  
the punishment. Indeed, Allāh is ever Mighty, All-Wise. But those  
who believe and do righteous deeds- We will admit them to  
gardens under which rivers flow, wherein they will abide  
forever... (al-Nisā': 56, 57).

2- Believing that both Paradise and Hell are, at the present time,  
already in existence. Allāh said of Paradise,

﴿أَعْدَتِ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

**Prepared [already] for the pious.** (Al-Imrān: 133).

Conversely, He also said concerning Hellfire,

﴿أَعْدَتِ لِلْكُفَّارِ﴾

**[Already] prepared for the disbelievers.** (al-Baqarah: 24).

A *hadīth* narrated by ‘Imrān bin Huṣain (رضي الله عنه) has it that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(اطلعت في الجنة فرأيت أكثر أهلها الفقراء، واطلعت في النار فرأيت أكثر أهلها النساء).

**I looked into Paradise, and found the majority of its inhabitants to be of the poor. I also looked into the fire, and detected that most of the occupants thereof were women.** (*Bukhāri*: 3241; *Muslim*: 2738<sup>(1)</sup>).

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I- The *hadīth*, as quoted above, is from the *Bukhāri*'s book, while *Muslim*'s narration of the *hadīth* is concise, but carries the same meaning.

3- Believing in the permanent existence of both, as well as the immortality of their occupants. Allāh (ﷻ) says regarding Paradise,

﴿خَلِيلِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ الْغَوْرُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

**Dwelling eternally therein; and that is the great success.** (al-Nisā': 13).

And of the Fire He says,

﴿وَمَن يَعْصِي اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارًا جَهَنَّمَ خَلِيلِينَ فِيهَا أَبْدَأً﴾

**And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger- then indeed, for him is the fire of Hell; they will abide therein eternally.** (al-Jinn: 23).

The disobedience referred to in this verse means infidelity or polytheism; hence, that rightly accounts for the description of the culprit's stay in Hell as permanent and everlasting. The famous Muslim scholar, al-Qurtubi, said, "The word 'eternally' in the verse indicates that the disobedience mentioned therein is polytheism<sup>(1)</sup>".

'Abdullah bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(يَدْخُلُ اللَّهُ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ وَأَهْلُ النَّارِ النَّارَ، ثُمَّ يَقُومُ مَوْذُنٌ بَيْنَهُمْ فَيَقُولُ: يَا أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ لَا  
مَوْتٌ وَيَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ لَا مَوْتٌ كُلُّ خَالِدٍ فِيمَا هُوَ فِيهِ).

Allāh will admit the people of Paradise into Paradise, and make the people of the Fire too to enter the Fire. Then, a caller will stand between the two parties and proclaim, 'O people of paradise! No death. O people of the Fire! No death; let everyone live eternally in his/her present abode'. (*Bukhārī*: 6544; *Muslim*: 2850<sup>(2)</sup>).

1- Al-Qurtubi, *al-Tafsīr*, vol. xix, p.27; Al-Shawkāni, *Fathu al-Qadīr* vol. v, p. 307.

2- The wording of the *hadīth* as mentioned above belongs to Muslim.

### **Benefits of believing in the Last Day.**

Throughout his life, a believer enjoys immense benefits derived from his faith in the Last Day. These benefits include:

1- His interest in performing acts of obedience to Allāh is aroused, as he hopes to gain the reward of that Day. Fearing the potential punishment of that Day, on the other hand, creates in him a resisting force against any aspiration for committing acts of disobedience to Allāh (۴۷).

2- This belief also serves as a comforter for the believer over any bliss or possessions of this world that may elude him, for he hopes to be compensated with better bliss and reward of the hereafter.

3- It equally helps the believer to realise the perfection of Almighty Allāh's justice, as He will requite everyone on the basis of his/her actions [in the world], in spite of being Merciful to all.

## **Chapter Five: Belief in Preordainment [al-Qadā' wa al-Qadar]**

**5.1 Definition, proofs and dissimilarities.**

**5.2 Stages of Pre-ordination.**

## 5.1 Definition, proofs and dissimilarities

### 5.1.1 What is *Qada'* and what is *Qadar*?

The word '*Qada'*' literally means judgement or decision. As an Islamic term, it implies any decree Allāh has made concerning His creatures. This may have to do with either their existence or extinction, or effecting certain changes in their life.

As for '*Qadar*' in the linguistic sense, it is a verbal noun suggesting comprehensive familiarity with the extent of an object. While from a strict Islamic viewpoint, '*Qadar*' is the sempiternal pre-ordination by Allāh (ﷻ), regarding what happens to His creatures, based on His prior knowledge of that.

### 5.1.2 *Qada'* and *Qadar* – any difference?

Muslims scholars explain the dissimilarity between the two terms in the following way:

*Qadar* is the process of predetermining something before it is decreed, while *Qada'* implies winding up or completion of the matter. An erudite scholar of *hadīth*, Abū Hātim cited some examples to further clarify this issue. For instance, when a piece of cloth is given to a tailor, the first thing he does is to measure the cloth. At this stage the tailor may reduce from the cloth or add some extra metres to it as the case may be. However, when he has tailored it or made it to measure, he has thus finished working on that piece of cloth and cannot re-measure it again. *Qadar*, therefore, precedes *Qada'*.

Another eminent scholar, Ibn al-Athīr also said, "The two are correlative and inseparable; *Qadar* represents a foundation, while *Qadā'* is like the building [to be erected on that foundation]. Whoever tries to separate one of them from the other is indeed trying to pull down the building entirely".

Anytime *Qadā'* and *Qadar* are jointly mentioned, an exclusive meaning must be given to each with the aim of distinguishing between the two terms. However, if one of them is used to the exclusion of the other, each term becomes, in this case, a synonym of the other, and the two, according to some scholars, may be used interchangeably.

### 5.1.3 Proofs:

Believing in Preordainment constitutes a pillar of Faith, as proved in many Qur'ānic and *hadīth* texts. The Qur'ānic proofs in this respect include:

﴿إِنَّا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَخَلَقْنَا مِنْ قَدَرٍ﴾

**Indeed, We created all things with preordination.** (al-Qamar: 49).

﴿وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فَدَّارًا مَقْدُورًا﴾

**And ever is the Command of Allāh a decree predetermined.** (al-Ahzāb: 38).

﴿وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَمَقْدُورًا لَفِيرًا﴾

**He [Allāh] created everything and measured it exactly according to its due measurements.** (al-Furqān: 2).

There are many *hadīths* on this issue as well, including the *hadīth* of Jibrīl, which we have quoted earlier in this book. The

Prophet (ﷺ) in his answer to Jibrīl's questions about the articles of Faith, mentioned "**the belief in Preordainment, whether favourable or not**".

In another *hadīth* reported by Muslim, ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr bin al-‘Āṣ (رضي الله عنهما) said, I heard the Messenger (ﷺ) of Allāh saying,

(كَبَّ اللَّهُ مَقَادِيرُ الْخَلَقِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِخَمْسِينَ الْفَ سَنَةٍ قَالَ: وَكَانَ عَرْشَهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ).

Allāh had written the predetermined measures of His creatures fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth and His Throne was upon water. (*Muslim*: 2653).

Furthermore, the Muslim nation, right from the time of the Companions, have all unanimously agreed on the obligation of the belief in Preordainment. Tāūs, a famous scholar who lived in the generation after the Companions (رضي الله عنهما), said, "I have met some of the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), they all used to say, 'Everything occurs in a proportion predetermined!'" I also heard ‘Abdullah bin ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) narrating that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "**There is a predetermined measure for everything; even for incapacity and capability or capability and incapacity**". (*Muslim*: 2655).

Imam Nawawi also said, "There are ample and conclusive proofs on the affirmation of Allāh's Preordainment [for all things] in the Glorious Qur'ān, the *Sunnah*, and the consensus of the Companions, as well as men of authority among the old and late generations".

## 5.2 Stages of Preordainment:

Based on what we have in various Islamic texts, and as those texts have been explained by Muslim scholars, preordainment or predestination has four stages, which are as follows:

**First:** Allāh's knowledge of everything, whether existent or non-existent, imaginable or even unimaginable. He encompasses all with His vast knowledge; hence, He knows what has occurred, what is going to occur, and what has never occurred, how it should have occurred, if at all it had occurred. A proof of this comes in the body of the following Qur'ānic verse:

﴿لَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَوِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ فَدَ أَحْاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا﴾

**So you may know that Allāh is over all things competent, and that Allāh has encompassed all things in knowledge.** (al-Talāq: 12).

In addition, Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked about the fate of the polytheists' offspring who died young, and he said,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ).

**Allāh knows best what they would have done [i.e. if they had lived to come of age].** (*Bukhāri*: 1384; *Muslim*: 2659).

**Second:** The writing, by Allāh (ﷻ), of all things that will come to be until the Hour of Resurrection. Thus, He says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ دِلْكَ فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَسِيرُ﴾  
Do you not know that Allāh knows what is in the heaven and earth? Indeed, that is in a book [i.e. recorded]. Indeed, that, for Allāh, is easy. (al-Hajj: 70).

﴿وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ هُوَ أَخْصَبُهُ فِي إِيمَانِهِ مُثِينٌ﴾

And of all things We have kept count in a clear book. (Yā-Sīn: 12).

The *hadīth* of ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr bi al-‘Āṣ mentioned above is also relevant here as another proof, as it included information on how Allāh had written the measures of His creatures, fifty thousand years before the creation of the heavens and the earth.

**Third: The wish [of Allāh ﷺ];** whatever Allāh wishes will certainly occur, and what He does not wish will never come to pass. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَدَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَكَوُنْ﴾

When He [Allāh] intends a thing, His Command is only that He says to it, "Be", and it is. (Yā-Sīn: 82).

﴿وَمَا نَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

And you cannot will except as Allāh wills- Lord of all the worlds. (al-Takwīr: 29).

Similarly, Abū Hurairah reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,  
لَا يَقُولُ أَحَدُكُمْ: اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي إِنْ شَتَّتَ اللَّهُمَّ ارْجُنِي إِنْ شَتَّتَ لِي عَزْمُ فِي الدُّعَاءِ فَإِنْ شَتَّتَ صَانِعُ مَا شَاءَ لَا مُكْرِهَ لَهُ.

None of you should say, 'O Allāh, forgive me if You wish', or 'If You like, have mercy on me'. Let he [i.e. the supplicant] be firm in

**his invocation; Allāh does what He wills, and no one can compel Him.** (*Bukhāri*: 6339; *Muslim*: 2679<sup>(1)</sup>).

**Fourth:** The creation of all things by Allāh (ﷻ), whose power to do that is absolute and unrestricted. He -Glorified be He- is the Creator of every act and its actor; every moving creature and its movement; and every inactive or motionless being and its inactivity. Allāh says accordingly,

﴿أَللّٰهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكَفِيلٌ﴾

Allāh is the Creator of all things, and He is, over all things, Disposer of affairs. (*al-Zumar*: 62).

﴿وَاللّٰهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

While Allāh has created you and [all] what you do/make. (*al-Şāffāt*: 96).

According to *Bukhāri* in his *hadīth* compilation, ‘Imrān bin al-Huṣain narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(... كَانَ اللّٰهُ وَمَا يَكُنْ شَيْءٌ غَيْرُهُ، وَكَانَ عَرْشَهُ عَلٰى الْمَاءِ، وَكَتَبَ فِي الْذِكْرِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ، وَخَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ). -

...In the beginning, there was nothing in existence save Allāh, [then, He created the Throne] and His Throne was upon water. He wrote everything in the Book<sup>(2)</sup>, and created the heavens and the earth. (*Bukhāri*: 3191).

1- The wording, as quoted above, has been taken from *Muslim's* book.

2- i.e. the *Lawḥ Maṭfūz* (Preserved Slate), cf. *Fath al-Bārī* vol.vi, p. 290. (Translator)

Believing in all the aforementioned stages is necessary for whoever wants to establish his Faith in Preordainment. Any one who disbelieves in one or more of them has failed to have the required belief regarding Allāh's preordination of all things. Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

#### **Benefits of believing in Preordainment:**

The belief in Preordainment affords the believer many important benefits. In addition, it has far-reaching impacts on his/her life. These include:

1- Relying on Almighty Allāh, even as one applies certain means to achieve his/her goals. This reliance stems from the awareness that it is Allāh who creates both the means and the goals they eventually lead to in exact proportions.

2- The rest of mind one enjoys as a result of his/her belief that everything is controlled by Allāh's Preordainment.

3- Setting oneself free from self-conceit upon the attainment of any goal in life. Such an achievement is only a favour from Allāh in view of what He has preordained of the means that led to it. Hence, one would, instead, be thankful to Allāh and avoid self-conceit.

4- Getting rid of anxiety and weariness in case one misses an opportunity or finds himself in unpleasant circumstances. He/she remains calm and patient in hope for reward from Allāh (ﷻ), having known that such conditions are part of what He has preordained.

## **SECTION THREE: OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO THE MUSLIM CREED**

**Chapter One: Islam, Īmān (Faith) and Ihsān (Excellent Performance of Devotional Acts).**

**Chapter Two: Meaning and Norms of Alliance and Disavowal in Islam.**

**Chapter Three: The Due-rights of the Prophet's Companions.**

**Chapter Four: Our Duty towards the Muslim Rulers and the Populace, as well as the Need to Remain United with Them.**

**Chapter Five: Holding Fast to the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, as well as Prohibition of Disunity.**

## Chapter One: Islam, Īmān and Ihsān

### 1.1 Islam:

#### 1.1.1 Definition:

Linguistically, the word 'Islam' denotes compliance, submissiveness and obedience. On the other hand, 'Islam', as a religious term, is submission to Allāh by believing in His oneness, abiding by His laws, rejecting polytheism and being an adversary to the polytheists. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَشَكْرِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِتَوَرِّي أَعْذِبُنَّ لَهُ وَيَدِي أَمْرُهُ  
وَلَنَا أَوْلَى لِتَشْتَهِي﴾

Say, 'Indeed, my prayer, my service of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allāh, Lord of the worlds. No partner has He. And this I have been commanded, and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims'. (al-An'ām: 162, 163).

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ إِلَهِنَا فَلَنْ يُفْلِحَ بِمَهْدَهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

And whoever desires other than Islam as a religion, never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the hereafter, will be among the losers. (Al-'Imrān: 85).

#### 1.1.2 Pillars of Islam

The fundamental principles of Islam are five. The Prophet (ﷺ) explained this in a *hadīth* narrated by 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) saying,

(بني الإسلام على حسن: شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً رسول الله، وإقام الصلاة، وإيتاء الزكوة، والحج، وصوم رمضان).

**Islam is based on five [pillars or principles]: To testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh, and that Muḥammad is His Messenger, to perform the [obligatory] prayers dutifully, to pay the obligatory alms (zakāh), Hajj (Pilgrimage), and to fast during the month of *Ramadān*.** (*Bukhāri*: 8; *Muslim*: 16).

Similarly, the *hadīth* of Jibrīl, which we have quoted several times in this book, is another proof in this respect. In that *hadīth*, Angel Jibrīl had asked the Prophet (ﷺ) to tell him about Islam, and his response was:

(الإسلام أن تشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً رسول الله، وتقيم الصلاة، وتنجزي الزكوة، وتصوم رمضان، وتحجج البيت إن استطعت إليه سبيلاً. قال: صدقت... إلخ).

**Islam means that you bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh, and that Muḥammad is Allāh's Messenger; that you perform the obligatory prayers dutifully; pay the obligatory alms (zakāh); fast in the month of Ramadān; and perform the pilgrimage, if you can afford that.** He [i.e. Jibrīl] remarked, 'You have spoken the truth'. (*Bukhāri*: 50; *Muslim*: 8).

### 1.1.3 Meaning of 'Lā ilāha illa Allāh, Muḥammad rasūl Allāh'

Bearing witness that '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' means that only Allāh, and nothing else, has the right to be worshipped. On the other hand, testifying that 'Muhammad is Allāh's Messenger', bespeaks that

one would follow his command, accept whatever he has said as true, shun all what he has either forbidden or warned against and never worship Allāh except in accordance with what he has laid down as rules, or preached.

## 1.2 Faith (*Imān*) and its articles, and the Islamic ruling concerning perpetrators of major sins:

### 1.2.1 Definition:

The word "*Imān*" literally means credence and acknowledgement. Conversely, *Imān* as an Islamic term implies a doctrine that one holds in his heart, pronounces out verbally, and which also involves actions of the human organs.

### 1.2.2 Articles and proofs of Faith (*Imān*)

The pillars or articles of Faith are six, as demonstrated in the following Qur'ānic verse:

﴿لَيْسَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ تُرْكَعُونَ وَجْهُكُمْ يَقْدِمُ الظَّرِيفُ وَالْعَفْرُ وَلِكُلِّ الْبَرِّ مِنْ مَا مَنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمُ الْآخِرُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالْكِتَابُ وَالثِّينُ﴾.

Righteousness is not that you [merely] turn your faces toward the east or the west, but righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allāh, the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the Prophets... (al-Baqarah: 177).

Regarding proof from the *Sunnah*, we quote again the *hadīth* of Jibrīl, and precisely the Prophet's response to his question with respect to Faith. He said,

أَنْ تَزَمِّنَ بِاللهِ وَمَلَائِكَهُ وَكِتَبِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتَزَمِّنَ بِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ وَشَرٌّ. قَالَ: صَدِقْتَ... (ع).

That you believe in Allāh, His angels, Books, Messengers and the Last Day. You should also believe in Preordainment whether auspicious or inauspicious. Jibrīl said, "You have said the truth".

(*Bukhārī*: 50; *Muslim*: 8).

### 1.2.3 Increase and decrease in Faith

Evidently, both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* tell us that Faith deepens and weakens. The rise in one's faith is a consequence of engaging in devotional acts, while the opposite ensues from committing sinful acts. Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ أَهْتَدُوا زَادَهُنَّ رُّحْلَةً هُدًى وَمَنْ تَنَاهَىٰ عَنْهُنَّ فَأَنْهَىٰ نَفْرَةً هُنَّا﴾

And those who are guided, He [Allāh] increases them in guidance and bestows on them their piety. (Muhammad: 17).

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا اللَّهُ وَجْهَنَّمَ قَلُوبُهُمْ وَلَا إِذَا تُلَيَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا يَنْهَا زَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ﴾

The believers are only those who, when Allāh is mentioned, their hearts become fearful, and when His Verses are recited to them, that increases them in Faith, and upon their Lord they rely. (al-Anfāl: 2).

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَرَدُّوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ﴾

It is He who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers that they may grow more in Faith along with their [present] Faith. (al-Fatḥ: 4).

Proofs of this from the *Sunnah* include the sayings of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) that,

(يخرج من النار من كان في قلبه مثقال ذرة من إيمان).

He will [eventually] come out of (i.e. be freed from) Hell, whoever has in his heart Faith equal to the weight of an atom. (*Bukhāri*: 7510; *Muslim*: 193).

(الإيمان بعض وسبعون شعبة، أعلاها لا إله إلا الله، وأدنىها إماتة الأذى عن الطريق، والحياء شعبة من الإيمان).

Faith consists of more than seventy branches, the highest of which is '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*' (None but Allāh alone has the right to be worshipped), while the lowest is to remove harmful objects from the road. And modesty or bashfulness is also a branch of Faith. (*Muslim*: 57).

#### 1.2.4 Islamic ruling concerning perpetrators of major sins:

Grave offences, from an Islamic viewpoint, are divided into two, offences that lead to disbelief and atrocities that do not disqualify one to be a Muslim. Some examples of the former include; ascribing partners to Allāh – which is the gravest offence ever committed against Him, hypocrisy in Faith, and blaspheming against Allāh or His Messenger. The latter involves such misdeeds, which, originally, are not considered to be beyond the pale of Islam. Thus, the perpetrator remains a Muslim unless he believes the acts themselves are lawful. These include usury or interest oriented transactions, murder, fornication and adultery etc. The Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* mention that any Muslim who commits major sins of this category remains a believer, although his/her Faith decreases, and would be called a sinner or disobedient person.

However, his fate in the hereafter lies squarely in whatever may please Allāh (ﷻ). If He likes, He will forgive him, out of His mercy. He may also, out of His justice, give him a taste of the

punishment he deserves, if He so wishes. In any case, the person will not remain permanently in Hell; he will eventually be admitted into Paradise on the grounds of what he had, while he was alive, of Faith and *Tawhīd*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرِكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَكَ لِعَنْ يَنْكَلَةٍ وَمَن يُشْرِكَ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾.

Indeed, Allāh does not forgive [the sin of] associating partners with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And whoever associates partners with Allāh has certainly strayed far away. (al-Nisā': 116).

Anas (رض) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(يخرج من النار من قال لا إله إلا الله وفي قلبه رزن شعرة من خير، وبخرج من النار من قال لا إله إلا الله وفي قلبه وزن برة من خير، وبخرج من النار من قال لا إله إلا الله وفي قلبه وزن ذرة من خير).

Whoever has said, '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*', (None but Allāh alone has the right to be worshipped) having in his heart good [i.e. Faith] equal to the weight of a barley grain- will be taken out [i.e. freed] from Hell. Whoever has said, '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*', having in his heart good [i.e. Faith] equal to the weight of a wheat grain, will be drawn out of Hell. And whoever has said, '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*', having in his heart good [i.e. Faith] equal to the weight of an atom, will also come out of Hell. (*Bukhārī*: 44; *Muslim*: 192).

What we have stated above concerning perpetrators of major sins is in harmony with the view of the worthy predecessors of the

Muslim nation: the Companions, the Tābi‘īn<sup>(1)</sup> and those who followed them on the path of guidance and good conduct. This, likewise, is the moderate approach in this regard, as opposed to other stances, which are either too extreme or very lenient. The Kharidjites<sup>(2)</sup>, for instance, prove extremist by making anyone who commits a major sin a *de facto* apostate who deserves to be slain. They also believe that such a person would be a permanent occupant of Hellfire in the hereafter. On the other hand, the fanatic Murji‘ites<sup>(3)</sup> have also gone too far, though in a reverse direction, by putting the perpetrator of mortal sins and a believer who abides by the rules of Islam and does not violate any of its laws, on an equal footing, regarding both of them as being perfect in their Faith.

\* Proofs indicating that a Muslim, even if he commits major sins, should not be considered an unbeliever

The Qur’ānic evidence in this regard reads as follows:

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1- i.e. the generation after the Companions. (Translator)

2- The Kharidjites or the Sceeders are those who rose in opposition to both ‘Ali and Mu‘awiyyah (عَلِيٌّ وَمُعَاوِيَة) after the arbitration that followed the Battle of Ḥiffin. The Kharidjites hold, among many other extreme views, that there is an obligation to revolt against a leader of the Muslim state as a method of reformation. (Translator)

3- The Murji‘ites are those who confine Faith to either just a word pronounced, or a doctrine held in the heart or even just mere knowledge of that, to the exclusion of deeds. (Translator)

﴿وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَايْنِي مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَفْسَلُهُمَا فَأَصْبِلُهُمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ يَعْتَدَاكُمَا عَلَى الْآخَرِي فَقَاتِلُوَا أَلَّا يَنْتَعِشَ حَتَّى تَفْجِرَهُ إِلَّا أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَلَمْ يَأْتِ فَأَصْبِلُهُمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَفْرِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْرِبِينَ ① إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْرَوْهُ فَأَصْبِلُهُمَا بَيْنَ أَخْرِيْكُمْ وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ لَهُ الْكَلْمَانُ ﴾.

And if two factions among the believers fall into fighting, then make peace between the two. But if one party oppresses the other, then fight you [all] the oppressing party until it returns to the ordinance of Allāh. And if it returns, then make peace between them in justice and act equitably. Indeed, Allāh loves those who act equitably. The believers are but brothers. Therefore, make peace between your brethren. And fear Allāh, that you may receive mercy. (al-Hujrāt: 9, 10).

We could see in the above verses that despite the reference to both parties as having committed the sin of waging unnecessary war against each other, which of course amounts to a grave offence, and to one of them as an oppressor, Allāh (ﷻ) qualified both parties as 'believers', referring to them as 'brothers'. Furthermore, He even ordered the rest of the Muslim community to bring about reconciliation between their warring brothers in Faith.

The *Sunnah* proofs in this respect include a narration by Abū Sa'īd al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said,

(يُدْخَلُ اللَّهُ أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ يُدْخِلُ مِنْ يَشَاءُ بِرْحَمَتِهِ، وَيُدْخِلُ أَهْلَ النَّارِ النَّارَ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: انظُرُوا مِنْ وَجْهِكُمْ فِي قُلُوبِهِ مُهْكَالَ حَيَّةً مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ مِنْ إِيمَانٍ فَأَخْرِجُوهُ...).

Allāh will cause the people of Paradise to enter Paradise- He will admit into it whomever He wishes out of His Mercy. He will also cause the people of Hellfire to enter it, and then say, 'Check [if

there is] anyone [in Hell] who has in his heart Faith equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and let him/her come out...' (Muslim: 184<sup>(1)</sup>).

This *hadīth* points out that those perpetrators of grave offences who are Muslims will not be banished to live permanently in the Fire, as anyone with even the slightest degree of Faith will eventually be set free from Hell. Similarly, the *hadīth* indicates that the believers are never at a par; some are raised above the others, based on the nature or amount of their righteous deeds. However, Faith itself deepens or weakens on the basis of obligatory acts neglected, or forbidden actions perpetrated.

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I- The *hadīth* occurs in the book of *Imān*, chapter of 'Intercession and Drawing the Monotheists out of the Fire'.

### 1.3 Excellent performance of devotional acts (*Al-Ihsān*):

**Definition:** *Al-Ihsān* means being dutiful to Allāh (ﷻ) both in private and in public, as one who loves and fear Him, hopes for His reward, and is afraid of His punishment. This is accomplished through performance of obligatory and supererogatory rituals, as well as abstaining not only from prohibited acts but also from detestable ones. Those who posses the quality of *Ihsān* are the foremost in good deeds, who strive earnestly in performing meritorious acts.

Proofs from the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*

Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ﴾

Truly, Allāh is with those who fear [Him] and those who are *muhsinūn* [i.e. those who posses the quality of *Ihsān*]. (al-Nāhl: 128).

The proof of this from the *Sunnah* is demonstrated in the text of the *hadīth* of Jibrīl (ﷻ), when he asked the Prophet (ﷺ) to tell him what exactly the word *Ihsān* stands for. The Prophet (ﷺ) answered saying,

(أَن تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَمَا تَرَاهُ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَكُوكُمْ).

To worship Allāh as if you were [physically] seeing Him, for even though you do not see Him, He definitely sees you<sup>(1)</sup>.

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1- The *hadīth* has been mentioned earlier on p. 155.

## 1.4 Relation between *Islam*, *Īmān* (Faith) and *Ihsān* (Excellent performance of devotional acts)

The three terms occurred in the *hadīth* of Jibrīl, who came to the Prophet (ﷺ) purposefully to inquire about these issues. The Prophet (ﷺ) in his response described 'Islam' as compliance with outward religious obligations. Such as bearing witness that none but Allāh alone deserves to be worshipped and that Muhammad is a messenger of Allāh, establishing prayer (*Salāh*), paying the obligatory alms (*Zakah*), fasting in the month of Ramaḍān and Hajj (the pilgrimage) to the Sacred House in Makkah. He also explained the nature of Faith (*Īmān*) as being a hidden matter, involving the belief in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and Preordainment, whether favourable or unfavourable. Furthermore, his answer concerning 'Ihsān' shows that this implies being fearful of Allāh, both in secret and in public; hence his statement, "**That you worship Allāh as if you were seeing Him. Even though you do not see Him, but He, surely, sees you**".

Whenever the three terms are jointly mentioned, giving a distinctive meaning to each becomes a necessity. Thus, the word 'Islam' stands for outward obligations, 'Iman' represents private or inner issues and 'Ihsān' implies the highest degree of servitude to Allāh. However, whenever each term is used exclusively, the first two (i.e. Islam and *Īmān*) become synonyms and can be used interchangeably, while '*Ihsān*', in this respect, embraces the concept of both.

## Chapter Two: Meaning and Norms of *Al-walā'* (Alliance) and *Al-barā'* (Disavowal) in Islam

### 2.1 Definition:

*Al-walā'*, a verbal noun of '*waliya'*, is an Arabic word denoting an approach to something. It therefore, suggests, in this context, drawing near to fellow Muslims through love and support for them. It further implies living in their midst, as well as standing by them against their enemy.

*Al-barā'* is also a verbal noun of '*bara'*', meaning to cut something. It is therefore commonly said, '*Bara al-qalama*', that is, he chopped off a pen. The meaning in relation to our topic would therefore be to cut off ties with the infidels. Hence, one neither loves nor supports them, and should even restrict his/her sojourn in their land to cases of necessity alone.

### 2.2 *Al-walā'* and *Al-barā'* as prerequisites of *Tawhīd*:

A Muslim must see the cause of Allāh as the real criterion for either his love or closeness to someone, or his enmity and hatred for another. Thus, he loves and supports his fellow Muslims, as he does the opposite with the infidels. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّمَا وَلِيَّمُ أَنَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِلَيْنَا يُقْسِمُونَ الْأَصْلَوَةَ وَمَنْ تُؤْمِنَّ أَزْكِرُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾  
﴿وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْغَلَبُونَ ﴾

Your ally is none but Allāh and [therefore] His Messenger and those who believe -those who establish prayer and give obligatory

charity (*zakāh*), and they bow [in worship]. And whoever is an ally of Allāh and His Messenger and those who believe- indeed, it is the party of Allāh that will triumph. (al-Mā'idah: 55,56).

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَحَوَّلُوا إِلَيْهِودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أُولَئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أُولَئِكَ بَعْضٌ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي النَّقْوَمَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

O you who believe, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you, then indeed, he is [one] of them. Truly, Allāh does not guide the wrongdoing people. (al-Mā'idah: 51).

﴿لَا يَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادِعُونَ مِنْ حَبَّةَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَا هُنَّ عَابِدُهُمْ أَوْ أَبْشَأُهُمْ أَوْ إِخْرَانَهُمْ أَوْ غَيْرِهِمْ﴾

You will not find a people who believe in Allāh and the Last Day having affection for those who oppose Allāh and His Messenger, even if they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred. (al-Mujādilah: 22).

It is clear in the light of the above quoted Qur'ānic verses that a Muslim is duty bound to love and stand by his fellow Muslims, and to treat as enemy whoever treads the path of disbelief. Similarly, these verses shed light on gains of this mutual love and support that Muslims should have for one another, as well as the dangers of taking the disbelievers as allies.

### 2.3 The position of *Al-walā'* and *Al-barā'* in Islam:

The doctrine of *Al-walā'* and *Al-barā'* occupies in Islam a high position, as it is believed to be the strongest of all the bonds of Faith.

In other words, it indicates strengthening the love and intimacy that bind the Muslim community, and severing ties with the antagonists of Islam. According to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

(أوثق عرى الإيمان ولو لاة في الله والمعادة في الله وأحب في الله والبغض في الله).

The strongest of all the bonds of Faith is to stay attached to someone or set oneself against him/her; love or hate him/her, all fro the sake of Allāh and based on His injunction. (al-Tabarāni, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir* vol. xi p. 215; al-Baghawi, *Sharḥu al-Sunnah* vol. iii p. 429, both with a fairly reliable chain of transmission).

#### 2.4 The difference between sycophancy and pliancy, and the bearing of both on the concept of *Al-walā'* and *Al-barā'*

Sycophancy, in this context, means that one willingly forsakes the duty of enjoining virtues and forbidding vices; exonerates himself from all that is expected of him as a Muslim, in terms of vigilant care and concern for his religion, on account of flattering the disbelieving and disobedient folk in order to secure certain worldly material gains.

An example of this is when a person maintains an intimate friendship with either the infidels or those who practise and promote vices, socializing carelessly with them, even as they keep insisting on their bad habits or disbelief, while he makes no effort to prevent them from so doing, despite being capable of this. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿لَعْنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَيْمَنٍ بِسْرَهُ يَلِ عَلَى إِسْرَائِيلَ دَأْوَةٌ وَعِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمْ فَإِنَّكَ يَسَا عَصَمْوَا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴾٧٩ ﴿كَانُوا لَا يَنْتَهُونَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوْهُ لِنَسْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴾٨٠ ﴿كَرِيْكَيْرَا مِنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا﴾

Cursed were those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel by the tongue of Dawūd (David) and of ‘Isa the son of Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary). That was because they disobeyed and were ever transgressing. They used not to prevent one another from wrongdoing that they did. Evil indeed was what they were doing. You see many of them becoming allies of those who disbelieved... (al-Mā'idah: 78-80).

Piancy, however, is to ward off or prevent an evil in a courteous manner, without being harsh to the culprit or turning away from him, especially if one is scared of the person's wickedness, or fears that he may even do more harm to him or to his mission. This includes showing leniency either to an ignorant fellow who is under one's tutelage, or to a vicious person whose acts we are to warn against. We should not prove uncivil to him, but, instead, employ polite and refined methods in this regard, especially if there is a need to reconcile with such a person.

‘Āisha (رضي الله عنها) narrated the story of a man who asked permission to enter to the Prophet (ﷺ). When the Prophet (ﷺ) saw him he said, "What an evil brother of the tribe; what an evil son of the tribe"! However, when the man eventually [came in and] sat down, the Prophet (ﷺ) behaved with him in a nice and polite manner, and was completely at ease with him. After the man had left, ‘Āisha

(رضي الله عنه) said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, when you first saw the man you said so and so. Then, you [surprisingly] treated him so politely and enjoyed his company!' The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(يا عائشة متي عهدتني فجأة، إن شر الناس عند الله مفترزة يوم القيمة من تركه الناس  
البقاء شره). -

**O ‘Āisha, have you ever seen me using bad or dirty language? The worst person in the sight of Allāh on the Day of Resurrection will be he that people leave [undisturbed] to save themselves from his evil.** (*Bukhāri*: 6032).

The Prophet (ﷺ), therefore, for the benefit of religion, behaved with the man courteously and politely when he entered to him, despite the man's bad reputation. This, accordingly, suggests that pliancy and alliance or loyalty may run parallel to each other, in as much as that results in significant advantages. Such advantages may include harmonization, total prevention of an evil or, at least, reduction or alleviation of its bearing.

This, on the other hand, is an impeccable method of calling people to the path of Allāh (ﷻ). The Prophet (ﷺ) himself has set an example in this respect by dealing politely with the hypocrites in Madinah just to eschew their evil, and to endear himself to them and to others.

However, what has been stated above is different from sycophancy, which, in essence, means currying favour with sinners or wrongdoers for the sake of material gain and not for any religious interest. Sycophancy is therefore not permissible in Islam.

## 2.5 (Historical) models of compliance with the notion of *Al-walā'* and *Al-Barā'*:

Allāh (ﷻ) related the story of Prophet Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) as follows,

﴿فَلَمَّا كَانَ لِكُمْ أَشْرَقَ حَسَنَةً فِي يَوْمٍ هِيمٍ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَذْهَبُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِذَا قَاتَلُوكُمْ إِذَا كُنْتُمْ مُنْكَرٌ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُوَنِ اللَّهِ كُفَّرُنَا بِكُنْزٍ وَمَا يَنْتَنَا وَيَنْتَكُمُ الْمَعْذُوفَةُ وَالْعَضْكَةُ إِذَا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَخَلَدُوهُ﴾

There has been for you an excellent example in Ibrāhīm and those with him, when they said to their people, 'Indeed, we are dissociated from you and from whatever you worship other than Allāh. We have denied you, and there has appeared between us and you enmity and hatred forever, until you believe in Allāh alone'. (al-Mumtahinah: 4).

Also, Allāh gives us a glimpse of how the Anṣār<sup>(1)</sup> in Madinah stood by their brothers in Faith, the Emigrants from Makkah (*Muhājirūn*), saying,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ تَرَوُ مِنَ الدَّارِ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِرَ نَجِحُونَ مِنْ هَاجَرُ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَمْحُدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَكُهُ مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُنْقِرُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ يُنْهَمُ حَصَاصَةً وَمَنْ يُؤْتَقُ شَحَّ تَقْسِيمِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

And those who, before them, settled in the home [i.e. Madinah] and had adopted Faith. They love those who emigrated to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for things given to them [i.e. the Emigrants]. But [also] give them preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul— it is those who are the successful. (al-Hashr: 9).

1- Literally, the helpers.

**2.6 The ruling concerning being an ally of sinners and innovators:**

If a person is found to possess paradoxical qualities of either good and evil, obedience and disobedience, or following the way (*Sunnah*) of the Prophet (ﷺ) and introducing innovations (*Bid'ah*) in religion, such a person should be considered as deserving his due friendship, alliance and Allāh's reward on the one hand, as well his due hostility and Allāh's punishment on the other; each in accordance with the extent he/she has gone in observing or perpetrating such acts. This itself is not abnormal, for we could similarly find a person who earns honour for a reason, but deserves to be humiliated on account of another. A poor or poverty-stricken thief, for instance, may have his/her hand cut off for stealing (in accordance with the law of Islam), but may also be considered for a grant that will satisfy his need from the public treasury, or perhaps receive charity from his fellow Muslims. This principle is, therefore, an object of agreement among the people of *Sunnah* and *Jamā'ah* (The Orthodox Sunni Muslims).

**2.7 Do worldly transactions with disbelievers have anything to do with the precept of *Al-walā'* and *Al-barā'*?**

In the light of the authentic proofs, dealing with non-Muslims in trade or other business transactions is permissible in Islam. It is, similarly, unerringly to appoint them as aides in case there is need for that, or when it becomes inevitable to do so. However, this must be done on a small-scale and should not pose a threat either to Islam or the Muslims.

It is worth mentioning here that the Prophet (ﷺ) himself engaged the services of 'Abdullah bin Uraiqit<sup>(1)</sup> as an expert guide<sup>(2)</sup>, and even mortgaged his shield to a Jew, so that the latter would lend him a *sā'*<sup>(3)</sup> of barleycorn. Similarly, 'Ali (ؑ) hired himself out to a Jewish woman, for whom he drew sixteen buckets of water from a well, taking a date-fruit in exchange for each bucket of water. On another occasion, the Prophet (ﷺ) asked for the help of the then Jewish Community in Madinah to fight the polytheists. He also got assistance from the *Khuzā'ah* tribe in his campaign against the disbelievers of his own clan, *Quraish*. All of these instances have no negative impact on the notion of *Al-walā'* and *Al-barā'*. However, it should be added that non-Muslims residing in a Muslim community must comply with general (Islamic-defined) standards of behaviour, and should not engage in any invitation to their religion.

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1- Who was a disbeliever. Cf. *Fathu al-Bārī*, vol. iv, pp. 517, 518. (Translator)

2- As reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *ḥadīth* no. 2263.

3- *Sā'* is an old-fashioned measure. A *sā'* is equivalent to 2, 172 grams. Cf. Qal'aji, M., *Mu'jam Lughat al-Fiqahā'* (Dictionary of Islamic Legal Terms), p. 419. (Translator)

### **Chapter Three: The Due Rights of the Prophet's Companions (Sahābah)**

**3.1 Who are the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ)? Our duty to love and support them.**

**3.2 The necessity of holding them in high esteem and as persons with undoubted probity, as well as refraining from [unnecessary discussion of] their disputes. All in the light of Islamic proofs.**

**3.3 The Prophet's relations and their rights; his wives being part and parcel of his household.**

**3.4 The Rightly Guided Caliphs: their virtues, rights and hierarchical order.**

**3.5 The ten [Companions] who received, in advance, glad tidings of their admittance into Paradise.**

### **3.1 Who are the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ)? Our duty to love and support them**

#### **3.1.1 Definition:**

A companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) is anyone who has met him (physically during his lifetime). Such a person must be a Muslim at the time of that meeting, and must have died, also, as a Muslim.

#### **3.1.2 Our duty to love and support the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ)**

The Companions are the best generation, the cream of the entire Muslim nation, and with the exception of the Prophet (ﷺ), they are also the best thereof. We are duty bound to support them, love them, and ask Allāh to be pleased with them. We must also place them in their befitting status. Every Muslim is bound to love them, as that itself is part of our religion and Faith, which also constitutes an act that could bring one closer to Allāh, the Most Merciful. Conversely, harbouring hatred against them is considered an act of infidelity and tyranny.

Any slander or defamation of the Companions is in fact a challenge of the authority of the religion as a whole. The reason is that they were the bearers of the religion, through whom we knew of it in the first instance, after they had received it fresh, verbally, from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). They have also passed its contents to us honestly and sincerely, and disseminated its message to [virtually] every nook and cranny of the universe in less than a quarter of one century. Through their efforts, Allāh (ﷻ) subjected many cities of the

world to the rule of Islam, and people thereby entered the religion of Allāh (Islam) in crowds.

Both the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* have described the love and support for the Companions as not only an obligation, but also an indication of a man's sincerity in his Faith. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُرْسَلُونَ يَعْصُمُهُمْ أُولَئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أُولَئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ ﴾

**The believers, men and women, are allies of one another.** (*al-Tawbah*: 71).

No doubt, the Companions are believers – and of course, on account of Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger's recommendation, they are even the best of the believers. Having said this, it logically follows that showing love and support for them amounts to proof of Faith on the part of whoever loves or supports them.

Furthermore, Anas (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) has also said,

(آية الإيمان حب الأنصار، وآية النفاق بغض الأنصار).

**The sign of Faith is to love the Ansār<sup>(1)</sup>, while the sign of hypocrisy is to abhor the Ansār.** (*Bukhāri*: 17).

The Islamic texts relating to this issue are many, and cannot all be mentioned here. Nevertheless, we deem it fit to point out at this juncture some benefits of being an ally of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), both in this life and in the life to come. We are stating

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I- i.e. those of the Prophet's Companions who played host to the Emigrants (*al-Muhājirūn*) in Madinah. (Translator)

this with the hope that it may further arouse the readers' interest in pursuing this goal.

Prosperity and victory are some of these benefits in this life. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ مَأْمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْغَلِيلُونَ ﴾

**And whoever is an ally of Allāh and His Messenger and those who believe- indeed, it is the party of Allāh that will triumph.** (al-Mā'idah: 56).

Ibn Kathīr, the famous scholar of Qur'ānic exegesis said, "Whoever is pleased with the alliance, friendship and help of Allāh, His Messenger and the faithful- he/she will prosper in this world and in the hereafter, and will be helped, as well, in both".

Another benefit of having affection for the Companions, in the life to come, lies in the hope that those who love them will be assembled with them on the Day of Resurrection. The Prophet (ﷺ) has given a hint of this when, according to Ibn Mas'ūd (رض), a man came to him and said, 'O Allāh's Messenger! What would you say of a man who loves a certain group of people, but has not yet caught up with them?' The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) replied,

(أَلْحَدُ مَعَ مَنْ أَحَبَ).

**A man is with whom he loves.** (*Muslim*: 2640).

For this reason, the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) used to seek nearness to Allāh or His favour through their love for Abūbakr and 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما), and even regarded that as one of their best and most promising deeds in the sight of Allāh. According to

*Bukhārī's compilation of the ḥadīth*, Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) narrated that a man once asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about the Hour of Resurrection and said, "When will the Hour come to pass?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said to the man, "[But] what have you in preparation for that?" He said, "Nothing, except that I love Allāh and His Messenger". Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(أنت مع من أحبب).

**You will be with whom you have loved.**

Anas bin Mālik [the narrator] remarked, "At no time had we been as happy as we were that day, on hearing the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ) that, '**You will be with whom you have loved!**'." Anas continued, 'I love the Prophet (ﷺ), Abūbakr and 'Umar, and, on the strength of my love for them, I hope to be with them, even though I may perform less than they have done'. (*Bukhārī*: 3688).

3.2 The necessity of holding the Companions in high esteem and as persons with undoubted probity, as well as refraining from [unnecessary discussion of] their disputes. All in the light of Islamic proofs

### 3.2.1 The excellent quality of the Companions

Allāh (ﷻ) commended the Prophet's Companions, promised them the best reward and was pleased with them. Thus, He says,

﴿وَالْمُتَّقِفُونَ الْأُولُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ أَبْعَدُوهُمْ يَا حَسْنِ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَفَلَهُمْ جَنَاحٍ تَجْزِي بَعْثَاهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَلِيلِنِ فِيهَا أَبْدَادُكُمُ الْغَرَبَةُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

And the first forerunners [in Faith] among the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār* and those who followed them [in Faith] truly and accurately, Allāh is pleased with them and they [too] are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens [Paradise] under which rivers flow, wherein they will dwell forever. That is the supreme success. (al-Tawbah: 100).

﴿لَعَذَ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يَأْمُونُكُمْ نَحْنُ أَنْتُمْ شَجَرَةٌ﴾

Certainly, Allāh was pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you [i.e. Muḥammad] under the Tree. (al-Fath: 18).

﴿إِنَّ الْفَقَرَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ اخْرَجُوا مِنْ دِيْرِهِمْ وَأَمْرَأْتِهِمْ يَتَعَافَّونَ فَقَدْلَا فِيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرَضُونَهُ وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أَوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّابِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَُّونَ النَّازَارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قِبْلَهُ يُحْمِلُونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَحْمِلُونَ فِي صَدْرِهِمْ حَاجَةً كَمَا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْتِرُوكُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ حَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقَ شَعْرَقَبِيهِ فَأَوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلَا يَحْوِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا يَعْمَلُ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غَلَّا لِلَّذِينَ مَأْمُونُوا رِبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَبُّ رَحْمَةٍ﴾

For the indigent Emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their property, while seeking bounty from Allāh and His pleasure, and helping Allāh [i.e. His religion] and His Messenger. Those are the truthful. And those who, before them, settled in the home [i.e. Madīnah] and had adopted Faith. They love those who emigrated to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for things given to them [i.e. the Emigrants]. But [also] give them preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul, it is those who are the successful. And those who came after them, they say 'Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts rancour against those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed You are Most Kind, Most Merciful'. (al-Ḥashr: 8, 9 and 10).

The above quoted Qur'ānic verses manifest the excellent qualities of the Companions and how [Allāh] has commended them. Whether they were of the Emigrants (*Muhājirūn*), or the Helpers (*Anṣār*), those who partook in the Battle of Badr, those who were present in the *Ridwān* pledge of allegiance that took place under the Tree or whoever had the privilege of being a Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ). The verses continued by describing the succeeding generations (after the Companions) as those who seek Allāh's forgiveness for their predecessors among the Companions, and beseech Him to keep off their hearts any resentment towards their fellow believers.

Those Qur'anic verses and many other similar ones also contain references to asking Allāh (ﷻ) to be pleased with the Companions, the glad tidings of their admittance into Paradise, their attainment of the supreme success, and speaking highly of them. Furthermore, the verses mention some of their qualities, such as their love for others, unselfishness, generosity, and love for their Muslim brothers. Also mentioned is their support for the religion of Allāh and other great qualities and good repute, all of which they rightly deserve.

Likewise, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷻ) has given credit to the Companions in a number of *hadīths*, including the one reported by Muslim on the authority of Jābir bin 'Abdullah (رضي الله عنه) who quoted the Prophet (ﷻ) as saying,

(لَا يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ أَحَدٌ بِأَيْمَانِ نَحْنَ نَحْمِلُهُ).

**None of those who pledged allegiance [to me] under the Tree shall enter the Fire.** (*Muslim*: 2496).

There are *hadīths* speaking generally of the virtues of all the Companions, while some others focus on the heroes of *Badr*. There are still other *hadīths* mentioning precisely excellent qualities of certain individuals among the Companions.

The duty of every Muslim is, therefore, to practically apply those *hadīths*, assuming every Companion of the Prophet (ﷻ) as deserving his love and support. He should also invoke Allāh to be pleased with them, speak highly of them, follow their examples and let their way of life be his guiding principles.

### 3.2.2 Refraining from [unnecessary discussion of] the Companions' differences, and the Islamic ruling with respect to abusing or insulting them

We must have known from the foregoing that the Companions are, with the exception of our Prophet (ﷺ), the elite of this Muslim nation (*ummah*) and the best thereof; they were the first among this nation to embrace Islam. They are landmarks of guidance, and lights where and when there is darkness. They strove hard in Allāh's cause as they ought to have striven, and fought courageously in defending the interest of Islam, until Allāh (ﷻ), through their efforts, established the religion (Islam) firmly. Hence, whoever dispraises or insults them, or belittle anyone of them- he is one of the most evil of all creation, whose action amounts to an assault against the religion as a whole.

Anyone who dares to accuse the Companions of unbelief or apostasy is himself, with even more reason, an infidel or apostate. Quite evidently, no matter the amount of devotional acts anyone coming after the generation of the Companions may embark on, he/she can never rise to their calibre. Both Bukhāri and Muslim reported in their authentic *haadith* compilations that Abū Sa'īd al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) quoted Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying,

(لَا تسبوا أحداً من أصحابي، فلن أحدكم لو أنفق مثل أحد ذهبًا ما أدركه أحد هم ولا نصيفه).

**Do not abuse any of my Companions; for if one of you spent gold equal to the *Uhad* mountain [in Allah's cause], that would not be**

equal to a *mud*<sup>(1)</sup> or even half a *mud* spent by one of them. (*Bukhārī*: 3673; *Muslim*: 2540, 2541). This *hadīth* is a proof forbidding anyone to abuse or insult the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Furthermore, it stresses that nobody can reach their status, no matter what amount of righteous acts he/she may perform.

Every Muslim must, therefore, believe in the integrity of the Companions, and ask Allāh to be pleased with them. Likewise, he should shun any interest in taking up the controversial matters among them. Rather, he should leave their secrets or intentions for Allāh alone to decide. 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Azīz, a prominent Muslim leader and scholar of the *Tābi'īn* generation has said, "Those [i.e. the Companions] were people Allāh had saved our hands from being stained with their blood. We should, therefore, restrain our tongues from speaking evil of their honour or dignity".

In a nutshell, *Ahl al-Sunnah* (the Orthodox Sunni Muslims) love and support all Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ). They also place them in their rightful positions with every sense of justice and fairness, and not with mere fancy or partiality, which is but a transgression.

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I- A *mud* is equal to 543 grams. Cf. Qal'aī, M. op. cit., p. 419. (Translator)

### 3.3 The Prophet's relations (*Ahl al-Bayt*)

#### 3.3.1 Who are the *Ahl al-Bayt*?

*Ahl al-Bayt* are those of the kindred of the Prophet (ﷺ) whom Allāh forbade to take alms. They are the families of 'Ali bin Abi Tālib, Ja'far and al-'Abbās, the descendants of al-Hārith bin 'Abdul Muttalib, as well as the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ).

#### 3.3.2 Proofs on virtues of the Prophet's family:

These include the saying of Almighty Allāh that,

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهَبَ عَنْكُمْ أَرِجَحَسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا﴾

Allāh intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O members of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you thoroughly. (al-Ahzāb: 33).

The Prophet (ﷺ) has also said,

(اذْكُرْ كُمْ أَنْهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ).

I remind you [to fear] Allāh, by giving my relations [a befitting treatment]. (Muslim: 2408).

#### 3.3.3 The wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) as part and parcel of his household

Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿يَسَّأَلُونَكُمْ أَنْ تُنَاهِيَنَّ عَنِ النِّسَاءِ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَا إِنْ أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِمَّا مَنَعْتُمْ فَلَا خَضْرَمْنَ يَا لَقُولَ فَيَطْسُمُ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرْضٌ وَقُلْنَ فَوْلَأْ بَغْرُوفَا ﴿٢٣﴾ وَقُرْنَ فِي بَيْوِكْنَ وَلَا تَنْرَحْتَ تَرْجُحَ الْجَهْلَةَ الْأَوْلَى وَأَقْنَنَ الصَّلَوةَ وَمَانِيَنَ الرَّكْوَةَ وَأَطْعَنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنْ سَائِرِيَدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهَبَ عَنْكُمْ أَرِجَحَسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾ وَأَذْكُرْنَ مَا يَتَلَقَّنَ فِي بَيْوِكْنَ مِنْ مَا يَكْتَبَ اللَّهُ وَالْحَكْمَةُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَيْرًا﴾

O wives of the Prophet, you are not like any other woman. If you fear Allāh, then do not be soft in speech [to men], lest he in whose heart is a disease [of hypocrisy or evil desire of fornication] should covet, but speak with appropriate speech. And abide in your houses, and do not display yourselves as was the display of the former times of ignorance. And establish prayer and give obligatory alms (*Zakāh*) and obey Allāh and His Messenger. Allāh intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O members of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you thoroughly. And remember that which is recited in your houses of the verses of Allāh [i.e. the *Qur'ān*] and the wisdom [i.e. the *Sunnah*]. Indeed, Allāh is ever Courteous, Well-Acquainted [with all things]. (*al-Ahzāb*: 32, 33 and 34).

Imam Ibn Kathīr commented on the meaning of the above verses saying, "A certain point concerning which anyone who reflects on [the meaning of] the *Qur'ān* shall have no doubt is that the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) are included in the saying of Allāh (ﷻ), "Allāh intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O members of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you thoroughly". In fact, they were the ones being addressed in this context; hence, Allāh said in the close of it, "And remember that which is recited in your houses of the verses of Allāh and the wisdom". That is to say, in other words, "Give practical effect to what is being sent down by Allāh (ﷻ) to His Messenger, while in your houses, of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*". Thus, Qatādah and some

other notable scholars gave the meaning of this last mentioned verse as, "Remember this favour [of Allāh] with which you have been distinguished from all other women<sup>(1)</sup>".

### 3.3.4 The [Prophet's] bidding with respect to his relations

As mentioned above, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) has said,

(أَنْ كُرْكُمْ أَشَدُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ)

**I remind you [to fear] Allāh, by giving my relations [a befitting treatment].** (*Muslim*: 2408).

The *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Followers of the *Sunnah* or the Orthodox Sunni Muslims), therefore, love and honour the family of their Prophet (ﷺ), in keeping to his bidding concerning them. This is even construed as part of their loving and honouring the Prophet (ﷺ), himself. However, being a relative of the Prophet, alone, is not enough to merit the Muslim's love or alliance. Rather, such is contingent on the person's (i.e. the member of the Prophet's family) compliance with the *Sunnah*, and his sincere adherence to the law of Islam; just as his ancestors, Al-'Abbās, 'Ali and their offspring had been before.

We could now observe how fair the stance of *Ahl al-Sunnah* (the Orthodox Sunni Muslims) on this issue is. They love and support the upright and the pious among the Prophet's relations, but disavow whoever defies the Prophet's orders and deviates from the religion, even if he were of the household of the Prophet (ﷺ). As mentioned

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1- Ibn Kathīr, *al-Tafsīr* vol. vi p. 411.

earlier, being a relative of the Prophet (ﷺ) or a member of his household can never, alone, avail anybody, except if the person is found to be upright in accordance with the law of Islam. Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated saying, When this Qur'anic verse:

﴿وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبَاتِ﴾

**And warn [O Muhammad] your closest kindred.** (al-Shu'arā': 214).

was revealed to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), he got up and proclaimed,

(يا معشر قريش او كلمة نحوها، اشرروا أنفسكم لا أغني عنكم من الله شيئاً، يا بني عبد مناف لا أغني عنكم من الله شيئاً، يا صفيحة عمدة رسول الله لا أغني عنك من الله شيئاً، ويا فاطمة بنت محمد سلبي ما شئت من مالي لا أغني عنك من الله شيئاً).

**O people of Quraish!<sup>(1)</sup>** (or perhaps he said another word similar to this) Save yourself [from Hell]; I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment. **O Descendants of Abdu Manāf!** I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment. **O Ṣafiyah, the aunt of Allāh's Messenger!** I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment. **O Fātimah, the daughter of Muhammad!** Ask me [to give you] anything you like of my property, [but] I cannot save you from Allāh's punishment. (*Bukhārī*: 4771; *Muslim*: 204).

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said in another *hadīth*,

(من بطا به عمله لم يسرع به نسيبه).

**Anyone whose deed has slowed down [i.e. in the Sight of Allāh], his family relationship cannot speed him up.** (*Muslim*: 2699).

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I- Quraish is the tribe the Prophet (ﷺ) himself belonged to. (Translator)

*Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* (Followers of the *Sunnah* or the Orthodox Sunni Muslims) disown those who exceed proper limits in extolling certain members of the Prophet's family, and even claim that they were infallible. Similarly, *Ahl al-Sunnah* disavow some other groups who either declare themselves enemies of the righteous and upright members of the Prophet's family or speak evil of them. They, equally, wash their hands of the way of the innovators, whose practice is to take the persons of the Prophet's relations as means of approach to Allāh, or even assume them other gods besides Him.

The *Ahl al-Sunnah*'s approach to this and other issues is thus moderate and upright, tolerating neither excess nor negligence.

### 3.4 The Rightly Guided Caliphs (*Al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn*) (رضي الله عنهم)

#### 3.4.1 Who are the Rightly Guided Caliphs?

They are: Abūbakr (al-Šiddīq), ‘Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb (al-Fārūq), ‘Uthmān bin ‘Affān (Dhū al-Nūrain) and ‘Ali bin Abī Ṭālib (Abu al-Sibṭain). May Allāh please them and be pleased with them.

#### 3.4.2 Their position and the necessity of following their way of life

The *Khulafā' Rāshidūn* (رضي الله عنهم) are the best of the Prophet's Companions, and the rightly guided caliphs who the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) ordered us to follow and to hold fast to their guidance. This has come in a *hadīth* narrated by al-‘Irbād bin Sāriyah (رضي الله عنه) who quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(أوصيكم بالسمع والطاعة. فإنه من يعش منكم بعدي فسيرى الخلافاً كثيراً، فعليكم بسنتي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين من بعدي، تمسكوا بها وغضروا عليها بالتوارد، وإنما لكم رحمة في أمورٍ، فإنَّ كلي بدعة ضلاله).

**I instruct you to hear and obey [your leaders]; for whoever among you lives after me shall witness a lot of dissension. So you must hold to my way (*Sunnah*) and that of the Rightly Guided Caliphs [who shall reign] after me. Keep to them and hang on to them. Moreover, beware of newly invented matters [in religion]; every *bid'ah* (innovation in religion) is, indeed, straying from the right path.** (Reported in *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol. iv, p. 126-127 and *Sunan Tirmidhi*, vol. vii p. 438 with a sound chain of transmission).

### 3.4.3 Excellent qualities of the Rightly Guided Caliphs

The Followers of *Sunnah* or Orthodox Sunni Muslims unanimously agree that the Rightly Guided Caliphs must be ranked, in terms of who is superior to whom, according to the order of their assumption of the caliphate: Abūbakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān, then ‘Ali (ﷺ). Many *hadīths* have been reported regarding their virtues, of which we shall now mention just one for each of them.

As for Abūbakr (ﷺ), the *hadīths* mentioning his virtues include the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ) publicly on his pulpit,

لَوْ كُنْتُ مُسْخَدًا مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ خَلِيلًا، لَا تَخْذُلْنِي إِلَيْكُمْ خَلِيلًا، لَا يَقِنُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ خَرْجَةً إِلَّا سَدَّتْ إِلَّا خَرْجَةً أَيْ بَكْرٍ.

If I were to choose a bosom friend from among those living on the earth, I would have, definitely, chosen Abūbakr as my bosom friend. Leave no wicket in the mosque unclosed, except the wicket of Abūbakr. (*Bukhāri*: 3654; *Muslim*: 2382).

Concerning ‘Umar (ﷺ), the Prophet (ﷺ) used to say,

فَدَّ كَانَ فِي الْأَمْمَ قَبْلَكُمْ مُحَمَّدُونَ، فَإِنْ يَكُنْ فِي أُمَّةٍ أَحَدٌ فَإِنَّ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابَ مِنْهُمْ.

Among the nations before you, there used to be people who were divinely inspired [even though they were not Prophets]. If there is any of such persons amongst my followers, ‘Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb must, surely, be one of them. (*Bukhāri*: 3689; *Muslim*: 2398).

Regarding ‘Uthmān (ﷺ), ‘Āishah (رضي الله عنها) narrated in a lengthy *hadīth* that, "Abūbakr entered [the house of the Prophet (ﷺ)], then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān. When the Prophet (ﷺ) noticed the presence of ‘Uthmān he sat down and adjusted his dress. [Later],

'Āishah (رضي الله عنها) asked the Prophet (ﷺ) of the reason behind his act, and he replied,

(لَا أَسْتَحِي مِنْ رَجُلٍ تَسْتَحِي مِنْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ).

**Must I not feel shy before a man whom the angels feel shy before?**  
(*Muslim*: 2401).

With respect to 'Ali (عليه السلام), a *hadīth* narrated by Sahl bin Sa'd (رضي الله عنه) has it that the Prophet (ﷺ) said on the eve of the famous *Khaibar* military expedition,

(لَا تُعْطِنُ الرَّايةَ غَدَاءً رَجُلًا يُحِبُّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ، وَيُحِبُّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُفْتَحُ اللَّهُ عَلَى يَدِهِ ... قَالَ: ادْعُوا لِي عَلَيْهِ ...).

**Indeed, I shall give the war-flag tomorrow to a man who loves Allāh and His Messenger, and Allāh and His Messenger love him as well. Under his leadership [as the flag-bearer] will Allāh grant [the Muslims] victory.** He then said, "Send for 'Ali..." and gave him the flag. And Allāh (ﷻ) granted them victory under his command. (*Bukhāri*: 3702; *Muslim*: 2405).

### 3.5 The ten [Companions] who received, in advance, glad tidings of their admittance into Paradise

We have seen in the previous pages the high status of the entire Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and their being upright. Having explained also that some of them are superior to others, it should be noticed that the forerunners who were the first to embrace Islam among the Emigrants (*Muhājirūn*), then the Helpers (*Ansār*) are the best class of the Companions, followed by the warriors of the Battles of Badr, Uhud and Ahzāb<sup>(1)</sup> respectively. After them, there are the participants in the *Ridwān* pledge of allegiance, then, as a general rule, those who had migrated and fought in Allāh's cause before the Conquest of Makkah are higher in rank than those who spent of their wealth and fought afterwards. However, to both parties Allāh has promised the best reward.

The best of all Companions are the Rightly Guided Caliphs: Abū-bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Ali (رضي الله عنه). Then, ‘Abdul Rahmān bin ‘Awf; al-Zubair bin al-‘Awām, the *hawāri* (disciple) of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ); and Tālḥah bin ‘Ubaid-Allāh. Others are Sa‘d bin Abi Waqqāṣ; the Trustee of this Muslim nation, Abū ‘Ubaidah bin al-Jarrāḥ; and Sa‘īd bin Zaid bin Nufail, may Allāh be pleased with them all.

There are *hadīths* mentioning virtues of all of these ten Companions together, while in some other *hadīths* that has been

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I- i.e. the Battle of Trench or the Confederates. (Translator)

restricted to some of them alone. One of those *hadīths* that state generally virtues of all the ten was reported by Ahmad and the authors of the *Sunnan*<sup>(1)</sup>, on the authority of ‘Abdul Rahmān bin al-Akhnas who quoted Sa‘id bin Zayd (رضي الله عنه) as saying, "I testify that I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying,

(عشرة في الجنة، النبي في الجنة، وأبو بكر في الجنة، وعمر في الجنة، وعثمان في الجنة، وعلى في الجنة، وطلحة في الجنة، والزبير بن العوام في الجنة، وسعد بن مالك في الجنة، وعبد الرحمن بن عوف في الجنة)، ولو شئت لسميت العاشر. قال: فقالوا: من هو؟ فسكت قال: فقالوا: من هو؟ فقال: (هو سعيد بن زيد).

Ten [persons] will be in Paradise. The Prophet will be in Paradise, Abū Bakr will be in Paradise, and so will be ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Tālḥah, al-Zubair bin al-‘Awām, Sa‘d bin Mālik and ‘Abdul Rahmān bin ‘Awf. Sa‘id, the narrator continued, "Had it been my wish to tell you the tenth person I would have done so. Then, the audience inquired, 'Who is he'? Sa‘id was silent. They inquired again, 'Who is he'? Then he said, "He is Sa‘id bin Zayd"<sup>(2)</sup>. (*Musnad Ahmad*, vol. i, p. 188 with a sound chain of narration).

In addition to these ten, the Prophet (ﷺ) has equally given the good news of entering Paradise to others among his Companions. Such as ‘Abdullah bin Mas‘ūd, Bilāl bin Rabāh, ‘Ukāsha bin Mihsan, Ja‘far bin Abi Tālib, and many others. The method the *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Followers of the *Sunnah* or the Orthodox Sunni Muslims) apply in

1- That is, the *hadīth* compilations by Abū Dawūd, Tirmidhi, Nasā’ī and Ibn Mājah. (Translator)

2- That is, the narrator himself. (Translator)

this regard is to mention categorically by name, as an occupant of Paradise, whoever has been marked as such through a textual evidence from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Thus, they testify that such a person will be admitted into Paradise, based on a testimony Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) had given in this regard. However, as for those of them who did not belong to this category the *Ahl al-Sunnah* also hope for them the best, pursuant to the promise that Allāh has made for all of the Prophet's Companions, regarding their being admitted into Paradise. Allāh said after mentioning the Companions and what made some of them superior to others,

﴿وَكُلُّ وَعْدٍ لِّلَّهِ الْمُصْلِحُونَ﴾

**And to all Allāh has promised the best [i.e. Paradise].** (al-Nisā': 95).

Regarding other individual Muslims, the *Ahl al-Sunnah* never state definitely that so and so will go to either Paradise or Hell. Rather, they wish that the righteous be rewarded favourably, and fear that the culprits may be liable to punishment. Nevertheless, they hold, with certainty, that whoever breathes his last being a monotheist (a true believer) shall not live permanently in Hell. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ لِأَنْ يُشْرِكُ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُرِجَتْ ذَارَاتُكُلِّ مَنْ يَكْرَهُ﴾

**Indeed, Allāh does not forgive [the sin of] associating partners with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills.** (al-Nisā': 116).

## Chapter Four: Our duty towards the Muslim rulers and the populace, as well as the need to remain united with them

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Abū Ruqayyah, Tamim al-Ddāri (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

(الدين الصالحة، فلنا من يا رسول الله؟ قال: هـ ولکتابه ولرسوله ولائمة المسلمين وعامتهم).

The religion is the *nasīḥah* [i.e. sincere well-wishing, counsel, admonition, etc.] We (i.e. the audience) said, 'For whom, oh Allāh's Messenger?' He replied, "For Allāh, His Book, His Messenger and for the Muslims, both rulers and the ruled". (*Muslim*; 55).

The meaning of 'the *nasīḥah* for Allāh' is to worship Him alone, exalt Him and fear Him. It also involves hoping for His mercy, loving Him, acting in accordance with His injunctions and abstaining from whatever He has forbidden.

The *nasīḥah* for His Messenger (ﷺ) entails acceptance of whatever information he has given as true, being obedient to his orders, following his way (*Sunnah*) and making his teachings one's guide in every action and inaction. It also denotes loving him (ﷺ), as well as worshiping Allāh only in the manner he has described.

The *nasīḥah* for Muslim leaders means supplicating for them, loving them and being obedient to them, in as much as they exceed not the limits laid down by Allāh (ﷻ).

Finally, we offer *nasīḥah* to the general public of the Muslim nation by enjoining virtues and forbidding vices. Furthermore, we should love for them what we love for ourselves of good things, and try to assist them in the best way we could.

#### **Our duty towards the ruling class:**

There are proofs from the Glorious Qur'ān, the *Sunnah* and consensus of the worthy predecessors, which describe obedience to an Imām (a Muslim leader or ruler) as an obligation, even if he happens to be a tyrant. This compliance, however, is not without restrictions; hence, a ruler's order should be heeded only when it falls within the limit set by Allāh (ﷻ), but should be neglected in case he goes beyond the limit by ordering what Allāh has forbidden. This is because one must not obey a created being at the expense of his obedience to the Creator.

Moreover, a Muslim must pray behind his ruler (as an Imam leading a congregational Ṣalāh), perform the pilgrimage (Hajj) and partake in *Jihād* under his leadership. In matters of discretionary deduction, he should also abide by the ruler's viewpoint. The subjects, and not the rulers, are obliged in this case to concede to the other party; for the public interest, harmony and lack of disunity are more important than any other personal interest. Legal and authorised methods must also be applied while counselling a Muslim leader or ruler, without revolting against him or becoming a rival to him.

Imam al-Ṭahāwī, a prominent Muslim scholar said, "We do not approve of rebellion against our leaders and rulers, even if they act

unjustly. We do not invoke Allāh against them, neither do we refuse to obey them. The obedience to them, we believe, is part of the obedience to Allāh that is binding [on all], as long as they command not perpetration of sins. Furthermore, we supplicate to Allāh that He may guide and forgive them".

The proofs of this are numerous, whether in the Glorious Qur'ān or in the *Sunnah*. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اطْبِعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطْبِعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَئِكُمْ هُنَّ الْمُنْكَرُ﴾

**O you who believe! Obey Allāh, obey the Messenger, and [obey] those in authority among you.** (*al-Nisā': 59*).

As for the proof from the *Sunnah*, we have a *hadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رض), quoting the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying,

(من أطاعني فقد أطاع الله، ومن عصاني فقد عصى الله، ومن يطع الأمير فقد أطاعني، ومن يعص الأمير فقد عصىني).

**Whoever obeys me has thus obeyed Allāh, and whosoever defies my orders has, likewise, disobeyed Allāh. Whoever obeys his leader has also obeyed me, and whoever disobeys his leader has equally disobeyed me.** (*Bukhārī*: 7137).

Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) also narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said,

(على المرء المسلم السمع والطاعة فيما أحب وكره إلا أن يؤمر بمعصية، فإذا أمر بمعصية فلا سمع ولا طاعة).

**A Muslim must listen to, and obey [his leader] concerning what he likes or dislikes, except when he is ordered to commit a sin; listening to, and obeying [the leader] is, then, not binding.** (*Bukhārī*: 7144).

The *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) says that any counsel that is meant for a leader or ruler must be offered in secret, and free from provocation and exaggeration. This has been pointed out in a *hadīth* reported by Ibn Abi ‘Āsim and others, on the authority of ‘Iyād bin Gannām (رضي الله عنه) who quoted the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) as saying,

(من أراد أن يصح لذوي سلطان فلا يبده علانية، ولما يأخذ بيده فإن مفعه منه فداك، وإن لا أذى  
الذي عليه).

**Whoever wants to advise anyone who is in authority should not do that in public. Rather, he should hold his hand [i.e. get so close physically near to him]. So if the ruler/leader takes his advice, fine! And if he turns a deaf ear to it, then the adviser has discharged his duty.** (*Ibn Abi ‘Āsim, al-Sunnah* vol. ii, p. 507 – with a sound chain of transmission).

These textual proofs from the Glorious Qur’ān and the *Sunnah* all command us to be obedient to our leaders and rulers in everything, save what amounts to disobedience to Allāh (ﷻ). We can also summarise the imports of those proofs as follows:

- 1- At any rate, a Muslim must hear and obey his leader/ruler, in as much as he has not been commanded to commit a sin.
- 2- We should never rebel against a ruler on the grounds of his refusal to heed our advice.
- 3- Anyone who counsels the rulers and forbids them to do wrong things, in a legal way, has rid himself of any guilt.
- 4- Provocation of unrest and the motives for such a provocation are all forbidden.

5- We should never rise or rebel against a Muslim ruler, unless we have conspicuous and concrete proof of his acts of disbelief.

6- It is obligatory to remain constantly with that Muslim community who follow the guidance of the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* in their speech, acts and belief. We must also love and support them, tread in their steps and be keen to see them united on the truth. Moreover, we must neither desert them nor dissociate ourselves from them. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَرَسِّعَ عَلَيْهِ سَبِيلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَوْلَهُ مَا تَوَلَّ  
وَنَصَّلَهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾

**And whoever opposes the Messenger, after guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen and burn him in Hell; what an evil destination!** (*al-Nisā'*: 115).

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷻ) also said,

(عليكم بالجماعة فإن يد الله مع الجماعة، ومن شد شد في النار).

**Always seek the company of the *Jamā'ah* [i.e. the Muslim group that sticks to the guidance of both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*]; the Hand of Allāh is with the *Jamā'ah*. And whoever isolates himself will also be isolated in the Fire.** (*Sunan Tirmidhi*: 2167; *Ibn Abi Āsim, al-Sunnah*: 80).

According to Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما), Allāh's Messenger (ﷻ) also warned that,

(من رأى من أمره شيئاً يكرهه فليصبر، فإنه من فارق الجماعة ثُبُرَ فنمات ففيته  
جاهلية).

Whoever notices something that he dislikes done by his ruler –he should be patient; for whoever separates himself from the company of the *Jamā'ah* [i.e. the orthodox Muslim community] even for a span, and then dies– his death is [as bad as that of] those who died in the pre-Islamic era of ignorance<sup>(1)</sup>. (*Bukhāri*: 7143).

All of the aforementioned texts point at the necessity of remaining constantly in the company of the Muslim community, as well as refraining from contending with those who are at the helms of affairs. The texts, likewise, comprise serious threat for whoever opposes this, for unity is a blessing, while dissension is agony.

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1- i.e. those who lived and died in anarchy without any divine or constituted authority to reckon with. Cf. Al-Nawawi, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. xii, p. 238; Ibn Hajar, *Faīḍu al-Bārī*, vol. xiii p. 7. (Translator)

**Chapter Five: Holding Fast to the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah*, and the Proofs of its Obligation:**

**5.1 The meaning of holding fast to the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* and proofs of its obligation.**

**5.2 Warning against innovation in religion (*Bid'ah*).**

**5.3 Exposing the ugly face of separation and discord.**

### 5.1 The meaning of holding fast to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* and proofs of its obligation

Allāh (ﷻ) has commanded the Muslim community to be united and harmonious on the basis of adherence to His Book and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ). He equally forbade disunity and explained the danger it poses to the entire Muslim nation, both in this life and in the life to come. To accomplish this, we have been directed to resort to the Book of Allāh in all fundamental and non fundamental issues, and to keep off any cause that could lead to dissension or disunity.

Therefore, the smoothest path to salvation is to hold firmly to the Book of Allāh (ﷻ) and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ); they are well-fortified and durable stronghold, for whomever Allāh (ﷻ) may grant success. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَاعْصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَنْقِرُوهُ أَذْكُرُوا يَقِنَتَ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءَ فَإِذَا  
جَئْنَاهُمْ فَلَمْ يَأْتُوكُمْ بِنَفْيِهِ إِلَّا هُنَّا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى سَقَاتِ حُمْرَةِ بَنْ الْنَّارِ فَأَنْذِنْكُمْ مِنْهُ كُلَّ الِّـ۝  
مِنْ أَنْهَى لَكُمْ مَا إِيَّوْهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

And hold firmly, all of you, to the rope of Allāh and be not divided. And remember the favour of Allāh upon you, when you were enemies (to one another) but He brought your hearts together and you became, by His Favour, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus, Allāh makes clear to you His *ayahs* (verses, signs, etc.) that you may be guided. (Al- 'Inrān: 103).

Thus, Allāh (ﷻ) has ordered that His rope be held fast. The term 'rope of Allāh', as explained by scholars of Qur'ānic exegesis,

means either His covenant or the Glorious Qur'an itself. The covenant of Allāh, which is binding on all Muslims refers to adherence to His Glorious Book and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ). Allāh has made it compulsory that we unite, and declared discord and dissension unlawful. He says further,

﴿وَمَا مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ رَبٍّ فَلَا يُحِلُّ لَهُ مَا لَمْ يَأْنِيْرُوا﴾

**And whatever the Messenger has given you, take it; and whatever he has forbidden you, refrain [from it].** (al-Hashr: 7).

The injunction here is all-inclusive, covering both fundamental and non-fundamental aspects of religion, whether explicit or implicit. Whatever the Messenger has brought becomes a rule, by which people must abide and should not oppose. Furthermore, a statement by the Messenger regarding any rule is exactly as a statement by Allāh (ﷻ) on the same subject; hence, no one is allowed, under any excuse, to neglect such a statement. Equally, it is impermissible to give preference to a saying of any created being over that of the Messenger. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿إِنَّمَا الظَّالِمُونَ أَطْبَعُوا أَطْبَعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تُؤْلُمُوا عَنْهُ وَأَنْتُمْ سَمْعُونَ﴾

**O you who believe, obey Allāh and His Messenger, and do not turn away from him while you are hearing.** (al-Anfāl: 20).

In this way, Allāh instructed His believing servants to be obedient to Him and His Messenger. He also warned them not to oppose the Messenger or imitate the infidels who stubbornly resist his mission. For this reason Allāh said, as in the above quoted verse, "And do not

**turn away from him".** That is, by being disobedient to him, defying his order, or ignoring his warning.

Allāh (ﷻ) has also said,

﴿إِنَّمَا يَنْهَا الظَّاهِرَةُ مَنْ أَمْرَأَهُمْ بِطَهَارَةٍ وَأَطْبَعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأَقْرَبُ الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُ فَإِنْ تَتَرَكُوكُمْ فِي سُرْدَرِهِ فَمَوْرِدهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَإِلَّا رَسُولُهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ الْأَكْرَبِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا﴾.

O you who believe! Obey Allāh, obey the Messenger, and [obey] those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allāh and the Messenger, if you do believe in Allāh and the **Last Day**. That is the best [way] and the best in result. (al-Nisā': 59).

Al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr said in his commentary on the above verse, "[The phrase] 'Obey Allāh' means 'follow His Book', while 'Obey the Messenger' indicates compliance with his *Sunnah*. The expression '[obey] those in authority among you' means when they command you to perform an act of obedience to Allāh, but not of disobedience; no created being should be obeyed at the expense of compliance with Allāh's injunctions".

Commenting on the saying of Allāh (ﷻ), "And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allāh and the Messenger<sup>(1)</sup>". Mujāhid, the notable Muslim scholar, said, "That means: refer it to the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger". This is an order from Allāh (ﷻ) that all matters of dispute among people, relating to either fundamental or non-fundamental issues, must be resolved through the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Allāh says as well,

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1- Al-Nisā': 59.

﴿ وَمَا أَخْلَقْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَّنَحْكُمُ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ ﴾

**And in anything over which you disagree, the decision thereof is with Allāh.** (al-Shūrā; 10).

Hence, the Qur'ānic and the Sunnah's ruling or testimony in favour of anything must be the truth; and apart from the truth what else can be there save error! In view of this, Allāh (ﷻ) said, as quoted above, "**If you do believe in Allāh and the Last Day**". That is to say, resolve your disputes and unfamiliarity through the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, and whoever fails to do so is neither a believer in Allāh nor in the Last Day. "**That is the best**", this clause explains that resorting to the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger in controversial matters is the best approach, and "**the best in result**"; that is, in the outcome and end result, as explained by al-Suddi, or, in the opinion of another scholar, Mujāhid, with respect to the reward ensuing from that. This latter viewpoint is close to the context<sup>(1)</sup>. There are still many more verses in the Glorious Qur'ān concerning the necessity of holding fast to the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ), and resorting to both in all matters.

Proofs of this (holding firmly to the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*) in the *hadīth* include a narration by Abū Hurairah (رض), as reported by Muslim, that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

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I- Ibn Kathīr, *al-Tafsīr* vol. ii, p. 304.

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُرْضِي لَكُمْ ثَلَاثًا وَيُسْخِطُ لَكُمْ ثَلَاثًا، يُرْضِي لَكُمْ أَنْ تَعْبُدُوهُ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَأَنْ تَعْصِمُوا بِحِلِّ اللَّهِ جُمِيعًا وَلَا تُفْرِقُوا، وَأَنْ تَنَاصِحُوا مِنْ وِلَادَةِ اللَّهِ أَمْرَكُمْ. وَيُسْخِطُ لَكُمْ ثَلَاثًا، قَيلَ رِقالٌ، وَكَثِيرَةُ السُّؤَالِ، وَإِعْنَاعَةُ الْمَالِ).

Indeed, Allāh likes for you three things, and hates to see you doing some other three things. He likes to see you worshipping Him alone without associating partners with Him. He is also pleased to see you holding firmly, all of you, to His rope and not be divided, and to see you advising whomever He has put at the helms of your affairs. On the other hand, He disapproves for you idle talk, too much inquisition and wasting of [your] wealth. (*Muslim*: 1715).

In another *hadīth*, Jābir (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

(إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيهِمْ مَا إِنْ تَضَلُّوا بِهِ عَنِ الْهُدَى وَسَقِيَ).

I am going to leave behind for you what if you hold on to, you will never go astray, after me: the Book of Allāh and my *Sunnah*.

(Reported by Imam Mālik in *al-Muwatta'* vol. ii, p. 899).

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said further in another *hadīth*,

(تَرَكْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْبَيِّنَاتِ لِلَّهِ كَثِيرَاهَا لَا يَرِيقُ عَنْهَا بَعْدٌ إِلَّا هَالِكٌ).

I have left you on a white (plain course) whose night is [as clear] as its daytime. None but he who will perish shall defect from it.

(*Sunan Ibn Mājah* vol. i, p. 16 -Preface-<sup>(1)</sup>).

Also, the *hadīth* of al-'Irbād bin Sāriyah mentioned earlier has it that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

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I- See also *al-Albāni*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Mājah* vol. i, p. 6.

(عليكم بستي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين من بعدي فسکروا بها وعصروا عليها بالتواجذ).

**Follow my *Sunnah* (my way) and that of the Rightly Guided Caliphs [who shall reign] after me. Hold on to them and stick firmly to them.** (*Sunan Abū Dāwūd* vol. v, p. 13; *Sunan Tirmidhi* –with *Tulṣīyah al-akhwadhi*- vol. vii, p. 438).

In addition, the Prophet (ﷺ) has given those of his followers who adhere to his *Sunnah* the glad tidings of entering Paradise. And this, to every believer –no matter how meagre the level of his/her Faith– represents the ever best good news, and the most coveted goal. The glad tidings came in the body of a *hadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رض), who quoted the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) as saying,

(كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَبْيَ). قَالُوا وَمَنْ يَأْبِي يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ أَبْيَ).

**All my followers will enter Paradise, except those who refuse.** They (the audience) said, O Messenger of Allāh, who will [dare] refuse [to enter Paradise?] He said, **Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys me has refused [to be admitted into Paradise].** (*Bukhārī*: 7280).

What form of refusal of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) could be more momentous than ignoring his order through inventing heresy in religion?

Assuredly, the Muslim group, usually referred to as the *Jamā'ah*, that will be saved from Allāh's punishment are those who tread in the path of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions. Ubayy bin

Ka'b (رضي الله عنه) said, "Stick to the way and *Sunnah* [of the Prophet (ﷺ)], for none of those on the way and *Sunnah* [of the Prophet (ﷺ)] –who, remembering [Allāh] the Most Gracious, sheds tears profusely out of his fear of Him– shall be touched by the Fire; never, this will not happen. Indeed, it is better to be thrifty in one's practice of the *Sunnah* and following the way [of the Prophet (ﷺ)] than to engage laboriously in practices that are contrary to the way and *Sunnah* [of the Prophet (ﷺ)]".

## 5.2 Warning against innovation in religion (*Bid'ah*):

### 5.2.1 What is '*Bid'ah*'?

'*Bid'ah*' is an Arabic word meaning, literally, an unprecedented invention. Hence, a derivative of the word appears in the saying of Allāh (ﷻ) that,

﴿بَوْلِيْعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

[Allāh is] the *Badr'u* [i.e. Originator] of the heavens and the earth. (al-Baqarah: 117).

However, in the technical sense of the Islamic law (Sharia), '*Bid'ah*' is any newly invented creed or act of worship in contrast either to the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, or to the consensus of the worthy predecessors of the Muslim nation.

### 5.2.2 The danger of '*Bid'ah*:

Innovations or inventions in religion pose grave danger, and have negative impacts, not only on individuals and the community, but also on the religion itself.

Such innovations (referred to in Arabic as *Bid'ah*) are utterly invention of new things in religion, introducing a saying in Allāh's name without any true knowledge of such, and adding to the religion something that has never been authorised by Allāh.

Innovation in religion may constitute grounds for rejection of one's acts of worship, as it also leads to discord among the Muslims. An innovator, in this respect, would bear the burden of his act in addition to that of whoever might have followed him in doing what he invented.

Furthermore, innovation in religion will be a major reason for denying an innovator access to the cistern of the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Hereafter. Sahl bin Sa‘d al-Anṣārī and Abū Sa‘id al-Khudri (رضي الله عنهما) both narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said,

(أنا فرطكم على الخوض، من مر علي شرب ومن شرب لا يظمأ أبداً، ليردن على أقراص اعترفهم ويعرفونني ثم يحال بيني وبينهم فاقول لهم من امتي، فيقال: إنك لا تدرى ما أحدثوا بعدهك. فاقول: محقاً لمن غير بعدي).

I am your predecessor (forerunner) at the Hawd (the heavenly cistern). Whoever passes by me [there] shall drink [from it], and whoever drinks [from it] shall never be thirsty again. Surely, there will come to me people who I will recognise and they too will recognise me, but a barrier will be placed between us. Then, I will say, "They are of my followers". It will be said to me, "You do not know what they invented in religion after you had left". Then, I will say, "Far removed [should be] who changed [the religion] after me". (*Bukhārī*: 6583, 6584; *Muslim*: 2290).

Moreover, innovation of this kind is a disgrace to religion and distortion of its landmarks. To sum up, innovation in religion poses a serious threat to the religious as well as worldly issues of concern to all Muslims.

Anyone who reflects on the content of the Glorious Qur’ān and the *Sunnah*, will discover that innovation in religion is generally prohibited and undesirable. This covers all types of innovation in religion, even though the gravity of prohibition varies according to the nature of any given innovation itself.

It is also not a secret that innovation in religion has been downrightly condemned as a single entity in the following *hadīths* of the Prophet (ﷺ):

(إِنَّ كُلَّ مُخْدَنَةٍ بِدُعْيَةٍ وَكُلَّ بَدْعَةٍ حَسَالَةٌ.)

**Beware of matters of recent invention [i.e. in religion]; for such inventions are innovation, and every innovation [in religion] is aberration.** (*Musnad Ahmad*, vol. i, p. 435; *Sunan Dārimi* vol. i, p. 78; *al-Mustadrak* vol. ii, p. 318<sup>(1)</sup>).

(مِنْ أَحَدَثِ فِي أُمُورِنَا هَذَا مَا لَيْسَ مِنْهُ فِي هُوَ رَدٌّ.)

**Whoever introduces in this matter of ours [i.e. Islam] something alien to it, such an innovation is bound to be rejected.** (*Bukhāri*: 2697; *Muslim*: 1718).

The two *hadīths* pointed out that every invention, with respect to religion, is an innovation, while every innovation is an aberration, bound for rejection. The import thereby is that innovation in acts of worship or belief is prohibited. The prohibition is, however, of uneven degrees, depending on the nature or gravity of the committed innovation. Thus, some innovations are sheer infidelity. Such as circumambulation of tombs with the aim of endearing oneself to the dead, offering sacrifices and vows to them, as well as supplicating to, or calling on the dead persons for help.

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I- Al-Ḥākim scored the chain of transmission for this *hadīth* as 'sound', and al-Dhahabi also consented to this.

Some forms of innovation may be means of Polytheism (*Shirk*). Examples of this include building [a mosque for instance] on graves, as well as performance of prayer (*Salāh*) or making supplication (*dhu'ā'*) at graveyards. Some other forms of innovation amount only to disobedience to Allāh and wrongdoing, such as when a person celebrates festivals that are not mentioned or recommended in the Islamic texts, or engages in invented invocations, or chooses to live in celibacy, or decides to fast in a standing position and under the heat of the sun.

### 5.2.3 Causes of innovation in religion

The causes are many, but the most prominent one is staying far from the guidance of the Qur'ān, the *Sunnah* and the way of the worthy predecessors. This self-imposed banishment from what we have mentioned culminates in ignorance of the sources of legislation in Islam.

Other factors that could lead to an outbreak of innovation in religion include:

- Being fond of fallacious argument.
- Reliance on mere human intelligence and evil comrades.
- Dependence on weak or fabricated *hadīths*, which the innovators normally use to buttress their stance.
- Imitating the disbelievers.
- Copying the attitudes of those who have gone astray.

### 5.3 Exposing the ugly face of separation and discord

#### 5.3.1 Proofs

Allāh (ﷻ) has condemned disunity and proscribed whatever means or cause that could lead to it. Many texts from both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* similarly warned against separation or dissension. Those texts further clarified the evil consequences of dissension and labelled it as a major cause of disappointment in this life, and of humiliation, punishment, and darkening the face in the hereafter. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَفَرُوا وَأَخْتَلُفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُزْلِئُكُمْ بِهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾  
 ۚ يَوْمَ تَبَيَّضُ وُجُوهٌ وَّتَسُودُ وُجُوهٌ فَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَسْوَدُتُ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكْفَارٌ مُّنْهَى إِبْرَيْكُمْ  
 فَذَوْهُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ۚ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ ابْيَضُتُ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَغَنِيَ رَحْمَةً أَنَّهُمْ فِيهَا  
 خَلِيلُونَ ۚ ﴾

And do not be like those who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them. For them there is awful punishment. On the Day [some] faces will turn white and [some] faces will turn black. As for those whose faces turn black, [to them it will be said], "Did you reject Faith after accepting it? Taste then the punishment for what you used to reject". But as for those whose faces turn white, [they will be] within the Mercy of Allāh [i.e. Paradise]. They will abide therein eternally. (Al-'Imrān: 105-107). Ibn 'Ābbās said, "The faces of the *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Followers of the *Sunnah* or the Orthodox Sunni Muslims) will turn white, while the faces of the innovators and those who became divided will turn black".

Also, Allāh (ﷻ) said in another chapter of the Glorious Qur'ān,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا يُشَيْكُونَ لَتَكُونُوا مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِنَّمَا أُمَّةُهُمْ إِنَّمَا هُمْ بِعَيْنِيهِمْ كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ﴾

Indeed, those who have divided their religion and become sects, you [i.e. Muhammad ﷺ] are not associated with them in the least. Their affair is left only to Allāh. He will then tell them what they used to do. (al-An'ām: 159).

The above texts prove the dispraising of discord, and highlight the danger inherent therein, whether in this life or in the life to come. They further illustrate how dissension was responsible for the doom suffered by the People of the Book (the Jews and the Christians), and how it has been the root cause of every deviation from the right path experienced so far by the human race.

Condemnation of discord and dissension, as well as urging people to be united and harmonious are also reported in a number of *hadīths*. In one of those *hadīths*, according to both Imam Ahmad and Abu Dawūd, Mu'āwiyah (رض) stood up and said, "O [you people], the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) stood up among us and said,

﴿أَلَا إِنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ افْتَرَقُوا عَلَى النِّسْعَةِ وَسَبْعِينِ مَلْهُ. وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ سَتَفْرَقُ عَلَى ثَلَاثَ وَسَبْعِينِ مَلْهُ. النِّسْعَةُ وَسَبْعُونُهُنَّ فِي الدَّارِ وَوَاحِدَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَهِيَ الْجَمَاعَةُ﴾

Oh, [do know that] the People of the Book who lived before you split up into seventy-two sects. This *ummah* (Muslim community or nation) will [also] split up into seventy-three sects, out of which seventy-two are Hell-bound, while only one will go to Paradise,

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and that is the *Jamā'ah*<sup>(1)</sup>". (Reported in *Musnad Ahmad*, vol. iv, p. 152; *Sunan Abu Dāwūd*, vol. v p. 5 and others with a sound chain of transmission).

The Prophet (ﷺ) has thus announced that his followers will split up into seventy-three sects; all but one only shall end up in Hell. The seventy-two erring sects are, undoubtedly, those who indulge in vices, as done by other culprits who preceded them.

Although the bone of contention in the discord referred to in the above *hadīth* may be confined to religious issues, the disagreement may also be centred around religious, as well as worldly issues that ultimately end up as religious matters. Moreover, it is also probable that the cause be purely mundane. At any rate, differences and discord are bound to happen among members of the Muslim nation; hence, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) warned his followers against such discord, with a view that whoever Allāh will save shall not fall victim of that.

### 5.3.2 Disunity and separation as a cause of the destruction that befell past nations

If we ponder over the content of both the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, we will find that the bygone nations were doomed on the grounds of their discord and frequent disputation, especially with respect to their Scriptures.

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1- The word "al-*Jamā'ah*" here and in some other similar contexts means the truth and compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ); no matter how large or small the number of the adherents may be. (Translator)

Having seen the peoples of Syria and Iraq taking issue with one another on matters relating to the letters of the Qur'ān, even though the Prophet (ﷺ) had forbidden such argumentation, Hudhaifah (رضي الله عنه) said to 'Uthmān bin 'Affān [the Caliph] (رضي الله عنه), "Would you put things in order [before it is too late] for this nation! So that they would not dispute about the Book, as did the nations before them"? The imports of this statement are two:

First: Prohibition of such a dispute.

Second: Learning a lesson from what befell those who lived before us, and being cautious not to model ourselves on them. Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَرَّأَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ لَيَ شَقَّاقُ بَعْدِهِ﴾

That is because Allāh has sent down the Book in truth, and those who find a cause of disagreement in the Book are, indeed, in extreme dissension. (al-Baqarah: 176).

﴿وَمَا أَخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أَتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعْدَمَا يَتَنَاهُمْ﴾

And those who were given the Scripture [Jews and Christians] differed not except out of mutual jealousy, after knowledge had come to them. (Al-'Imrān: 19).

Another related proof from the *Sunnah* comes in the *hadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said,

(ذُرُونِي مَا ترَكْتُكُمْ فَلَا هَلَكَ مِنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ بِكُثْرَةِ سُزْاْهِمْ وَاحْتَلَالِهِمْ عَلَىٰ أَنْيَالِهِمْ، فَإِذَا  
هَرَكْتُكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ فَلَا جُنْبُوهُ، وَإِذَا أَمْرَتُكُمْ بِأَمْرٍ فَأَتُوْرُ مِنْهُ مَا أَسْتَطَعْهُمْ).

Leave me in as much as I have not ordered you [to do something or to refrain from it]; for those who lived before you were destroyed on the grounds of their excessive curiosity and their

differences with their Prophets. Therefore, if I forbid you to do something, keep away from it. And if I command you to do something, do of it as much as you can. (*Bukhāri*: 7288; *Muslim*: 1337).

The Prophet (ﷺ), as we have seen in the above *hadīth*, ordered his followers to desist from any act that they have not been commanded to engage in, citing as a justification for this, the doom of the past nations on account of their frequent inquisitiveness and defiance of orders of their Prophets.

### 5.3.3 Is it a blessing to differ?

Some people claim that dissension is itself a mercy, drawing on a fabricated *hadīth*, which says,

(الاختلاف أمني رحمة).

**The difference [of opinion] among my followers is a mercy.**

This claim is unacceptable, in view of available proofs from the Glorious Qur'ān, the *Sunnah* and intellectual reasoning. We have previously mentioned some of the Qur'ānic verses as well as the *hadīths* concerning the condemnation of discord and disunity, which, we believe, are sufficient for whoever may like to ponder over them. Furthermore, the Glorious Qur'ān has made it clear that disagreement and mercy are both inconsistent and irreconcilable; hence, Allāh (ﷻ) says,

﴿وَلَا يَرْكُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ إِلَّا مَنْ رَحْمَ رَبُّكَ لَهُمْ﴾

**But they will not cease to differ. Except whom your Lord has given Mercy.** (*Hūd*: 118, 119).

Moreover, the *ḥadīth* which the proponents of this claim use to support their stance is absolutely false and invalid, and not even traceable to any book of the *ḥadīth* literature. Thus, the invalidity of the purported *ḥadīth* is, itself, enough to refute such a claim, let alone the irrationality of its content. No sane person would imagine that discord is mercy, knowing the dangerous consequences that usually ensue from it, such as mutual rancour, hatred and desertion, or perhaps war that often breaks out among people because of their disagreement, even on minor issues.

#### **5.3.4 How to get rid of separation and dissension:**

The rightly guided group of Muslims (*Jamā'ah*) are the salvaged party and the victorious group. To speak of their identity, they are those who strictly follow the way of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions, and never do they defect from the way or turn aside from it. Al-Shāṭibi, a celebrated Muslim scholar, said in his book '*al-I'tiṣām*'<sup>(1)</sup>, "The *Jamā'ah* (i.e. the way of the Orthodox Sunni Muslims) represents the practices of the Prophet (ﷺ), his Companions and their faithful followers". The path to salvation is therefore, following the way of the *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* (Followers of the *Sunnah* or the Orthodox Sunni Muslims) in speech, actions and belief, and refraining from being an antagonist or dissident to them. Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

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I- Meaning: Holding Fast to the Book of Allāh as well as the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (ﷺ). (Translator)

﴿ وَمَن يُشَاقِقُ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَتَشْيَعُ عَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّوْهُ مَا تَوَلَُّ  
وَنُصْلِلُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴾

And whoever opposes the Messenger, after guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen and burn him in Hell. What an evil destination! (al-Nisā': 115).

﴿ وَإِنَّ هَذَا أَصْرَحُ بِالْمُسْتَقِيمِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ لَا تَنْبِغِي الشَّيْلُ فَنَفَرُوا يُنْهَمُ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ  
وَضَلَّكُمْ يُوْءِي لَعْنَكُمْ شَفَوْنَ ﴾

And this is My path, leading straight; so follow it. And do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way. This He has instructed you, that you may become pious. (al-An'ām: 153).

In another *hadīth* reported by Tirmidhi and others, on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما), the Prophet (ﷺ) said,  
 (لَا تجتمع أمتي على ضلاله - أو قال: أمة محمد على ضلاله - ويد الله على الجماعة). My nation (*ummah*) -or perhaps he said, 'the nation of Muḥammad'- will never agree unanimously on an error, and the Hand of Allāh is [always] with the *jamā'ah*<sup>(1)</sup>. (Reported in *Sunan Tirmidhi* vol. iv, p.446 and other *hadīth* compilations with a sound chain of transmission).

With this, we come to a conclusion that the road to salvation and the symbol of felicity is to hold firmly to the Book of Allāh. That honourable and mighty Book, which no falsehood can come unto,

I- Cf. the meaning of the word "*Jamā'ah*" as stated above. (Translator)

neither from before it nor from behind it; it is a revelation from a Lord who is Full of wisdom and Worthy of all praise. Furthermore, to hold firmly to the authentic *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ), who would never speak from his own inclination, but exclusively through revelation revealed [to him]. The two, i.e. the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* are the only sources for the creed and *Sharia* (law) of Islam. Any method or approach different from what we have mentioned here is a loss.

Sticking to the *Sunnah* is, therefore, the way of the believers, the road towards gaining the pleasure of the Lord of all the worlds, and the well-fortified stronghold. It is as well, the way through which Allāh protects the Muslim community against the innovations of innovators, the false claims of liars and the distortion of fanatics and those who are ignorant. It is the system that made the first generation of Muslims righteous and pious; hence, we can attain neither success nor prosperity unless we revert to the same system. Mālik bin Anas, the renowned scholar of the Abode of the *Hijrah* [i.e. the city of Madinah] said, "Nothing could set right the last generation of this *ummah*, save that which had formerly made right the earlier generation". Meanwhile, the first generation of this *ummah* were upright because of their compliance with the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ).

It is pertinent to state in this respect, that our compliance with the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* has to be in accordance with the method and understanding of our worthy predecessors, for Allāh (ﷻ) has said,

﴿ وَمَن يُكَافِرْ بِرَسُولِنَا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَرَشِّقَ عَلَيْهِ سَبِيلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهُ مَا تَوَلَّْ  
وَنَصْلِهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴾

**And whoever opposes the Messenger, after guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers We shall keep him in the path he has chosen and burn him in Hell. What an evil destination!** (al-Nisā': 115). Keeping to the way of the believers, that is, the Companions and those who sincerely and accurately follow them is, therefore, the path to salvation.

We invoke Allāh, the Exalted, to bestow on the Muslims the courage to abide by rules of the Book of their Lord and that of the *Sunnah* of their Prophet (ﷺ), and to follow the way of the believers. The conclusion of our supplication is to say, "Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds". May His Blessings be upon our Prophet, Muhammad, as well as on his family and Companions.

## Glossary of Arabic Words/Terms:

**Aḥād:** Aḥād *hadīths* are those reported via solitary chains of transmission.

**Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah or Ahl al-Sunnah:** Followers of the *Sunnah*, or the Orthodox Sunni Muslims who follow, strictly, the laws of the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*.

**Al-Bait Al-Ma'mūr:** The Frequented House in heaven; seventy thousand angels enter it every day, and when they have left, they never return to it.

**Al-Ghaib:** Unseen.

**Al-Hijra:** The emigration of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his followers, from Makkah to Madinah.

**Al-Injīl:** Allāh's revelation to Prophet 'Īsa (Jesus) (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ).

**Al-Šahībān or Šahībain:** The books of *Bukhāri* and *Muslim*; the most authentic compilations of the *hadīths*.

**Al-Salaf:** The Muslim's worthy predecessors, such as the Companions, the *Tābi'īn*, etc.

**Al-Tawrāh:** The Torah; Allāh's revelation to Prophet Mūsa (Moses) (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ).

**Al-Zabūr:** The Psalms; Allāh's revelation to Prophet Dawūd (David) (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ).

**Ansār:** The Helpers; the Muslim inhabitants of Madinah city at the time of the Hijrah or emigration.

**Āyah:** A verse of the Glorious Qur'ān.

**'Aqīdah:** Faith or belief.

**Bid‘ah:** Any newly invented word or deed believed to be an act of worship without a proof backing it from either the Glorious Qur’ān or the *Sunnah*,

**Da‘īf:** A da‘īf *hadīth* is weak and unreliable.

**Da‘wah:** Calling others to the religion of Islam.

**Dawūd:** David, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Dhikr:** remembering Allāh (ﷻ).

**Duā’:** Supplication or invocation.

**Fir‘awn:** Pharaoh.

**Hadīth:** Cf. *Sunnah*.

**Hajj:** Pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allāh in Makkah.

**Hārun:** Aaron, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Hasan:** A *hasan hadīth* is fairly authentic.

**Ibrāhīm:** Abraham, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Idrīs:** Enoch, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Ilyās:** Elias, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Imān:** Faith.

**‘Isā:** Jesus, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Ishāq:** Isaac, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Ismā‘īl:** Ishmael, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Isnād or Sanad:** The chain of transmission of any *hadīth*.

**Isrā’ and Mi‘rāj:** The Prophet’s night journey and ascent to heaven.

**Istikhārah:** The special supplication for seeking guidance from Allāh before making important decisions, or when one is in perplexing situations.

**Jahiliyyah:** The period of Arab paganism preceding the advent of Islam.

**Jibrīl:** Archangel Gabriel.

**Jinn:** a species of beings created by Allāh from fire.

**Jizyah:** Money payable by certain categories of the non-Muslims in a Muslim state, or under the protection of the Muslim government.

**Ka'bah:** The Sacred House in Makkah.

**Karāmah:** a miracle performed by any righteous servant of Allāh other than His Prophets and Messengers.

**Kufr:** Unbelief.

**Kutub al-Šihāb:** Collections of the authentic *hadīths*.

**Maryam:** Mary.

**Mawqif:** Literally: stopping place, station, scene etc. In some contexts, it refers precisely to the gathering of all creatures in a single place on the Day of Resurrection.

**Miskān:** Angel Michael.

**Mu'addhin:** A caller who calls people to come out and pray in the mosque at the appointed time of every obligatory prayer.

**Mu'min:** A believer.

**Mufassirūn:** Scholars of Tafsīr (Commentary on the meaning of the Qur'ān).

**Muhājirūn:** The Emigrants; those who emigrated from Makkah to Madinah at the instance of the Prophet (ﷺ).

**Mūsa:** Moses, the Prophet (عَلِيٌّ الْمُسَاءِ).

**Musnad:** (pl. *Masānid*): The collections of the *hadīths* that are arranged not according to their contents, but, rather, according to their narrators or transmitters.

**Mutawātir:** A *mutawātir hadīth* is that which is generally acknowledged, or has been transmitted through recurring lines of dissemination, leaving no doubt thereby about its authenticity.

**Nūh:** Noah, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Qadar:** Preordainment or predestination.

**Qudsi *hadīth*:** Any *hadīth* narrated both in letter and spirit by the Prophet (ﷺ) from Allāh, which has been communicated to us either via a solitary chain of transmission, or through recurring lines of dissemination, but less in degree than that through which the Qur'ān has been transmitted.

**Quraish:** The prominent Meccan tribe to which the Prophet (ﷺ) himself belonged.

**Raka'ah:** A unit of the Muslim's prayer.

**Riyā'**: Showing-off.

**Ruqyah:** Therapeutic treatment involving both recitation and spitting.

**Saddu al-Dharī 'ah:** Precautionary measures.

**Sahābah:** The Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ).

**Sahīh:** The most authentic *hadīths* of the Prophet (ﷺ) are usually referred to as *sahīh*.

**Salāh:** The Muslims' ritual prayer.

**Shafā'ah:** Intercession.

**Shirk:** polytheism.

**Šifāt Dhātiyyah or Dhāti Attributes:** Any inherent quality of Allāh that is in no circumstances separable from Him.

**Šifāt Fi'liyyah:** The act-related attributes of Almighty Allāh.

**Šifāt Khabariyyah or the *Khabari* Attributes:** They are those of Allāh's attributes, whose confirmation or otherwise depend solely on textual evidence from either the Qur'ān or the *Sunnah*.

**Siyām:** Fasting.

**Sulaimān:** Solomon, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Sunnah:** Sayings or acts of the Prophet (ﷺ).

**Sūrah:** A chapter of the Glorious Qur'ān.

**Tābi'ūn:** Those who lived immediately after the Companions and have actually met some of them.

**Tafsīr:** Commentary on the meaning of the Qur'ān or Qur'ānic exegesis.

**Tahūr:** Anything that is itself pure and may be used for ritual purification, such as clean water and sand.

**Tashahhud:** The special form of supplication, which one recites during prayer in a sitting position after every two *raka'ats*.

**Tawāf:** The ritual circumambulation of the *Ka'bah* in Makkah,

**Tawhīd al-Asmā' wa al-Šifāt:** Believing in the oneness of Allāh regarding His names and attributes.

**Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah:** Oneness of Lordship.

**Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyyah:** Oneness of Allāh in His exclusive right to be worshipped.

**Tawhīd:** Monotheism; believing in the one and only God.

**Thiqat:** If a narrator of the *hadīth* is described as "thiqat", he is reliable.

**Tiwalah:** A charm used in order to endear a wife to her husband and vice-versa.

**Ummah:** The nation of Islam, or the Muslim community.

**Waliyy (Pl. awliyā')**: A righteous person in the sight of Allāh, usually referred to as "saint".

**Wudū'**: The Muslim's ritual ablution.

**Ya'qūb:** Jacob, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Yūnus:** Jonah, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Yūsuf:** Joseph, the Prophet (عليه السلام).

**Zabūr:** Allāh's revelation to Dawūd (David) (عليه السلام).

**Zakāh:** Obligatory alms.

**Zakariyyā:** Zachariah, the Prophet (عليه السلام).



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كتاب  
**أصول الدين**  
في ضوء الكتاب والسنة

إعداد  
نخبة من العالماء

ترجمة إلى اللغة الإنجليزية

د. عبد الرزاق عبد المجيد الأرق

الباحث بإدارة الشؤون العلمية في المجمع